



AGE OF COSMIC EXPLORATION

BOOK 05

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Age of Cosmic Exploration

(大宇宙时代)

by

Zhttty

Synopsis

Endless sky and infinite space, the cosmos isn't some paradise waiting to be found, it is full of darkness and danger, death and terror of the great unknown. However, for that glittering swath of blue, we have no fear! For the longevity of men, we have no regrets! Nothing shall stand in our way because it is finally our time, our age! The age of cosmos exploration!

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Chapter 401: Time (1)

Yao Yuan felt a lot more confident about this plan. Other than the Immortal, who couldn't be affected by any illusion or hallucination, the party now had a Deceiver in their midst as well. According to various data and hypotheses, Jay's Homo Evolutis power was on the same level as his own.

Even though Ji Jie was in general weaker than either one of them, she was one of the best Black Star Troopers. Her contribution couldn't be underestimated.

ZERO, on the other hand, was more of a burden than anything else. However, Yao Yuan had to bring her along for two reasons. One, her knowledge. She was the person who was the most knowledgeable about god-tier space civilizations. Two, as a precaution. Yao Yuan was afraid she might do something harmful to the Hope during its most vulnerable moment, like... causing the mass extinction of humanity or something along those lines.

"...By the way, ZERO, what is that globe of light you've been playing with? Is it some kind weapon for god-tier space civilizations?"

Yao Yuan used the time while they waited for the hangar to open to ask ZERO.

ZERO smiled innocently and replied without hesitation, "Nah, it's nothing like that. God-tier space civilizations have no need for weapons anyway... This here is the brain of the Hope. In other words, the AI you humans have created. Only those with life can enter this light dimension and restructure itself. If the thing exists as a pure spiritual form in normal space, then it too will manifest itself as a spiritual form in this dimension. For example, this AI."

Jay, who had been asleep for years, didn't know how far human technology had come. He had no idea that the scientific advancements in the past twenty years were almost equal to or had

even surpassed the total scientific history of humankind on Earth. When Jay got into the coma, the Hope had just left Earth. When he woke up again, even the Hope itself had undergone many upgrades. If not for the interior, which had remained for the most part unchanged, even the designer himself wouldn't be able to recognize this ship.

Therefore, when he heard the term "AI," he asked in shock, "AI? What's that? Don't tell me this is one of those computer programs that have their own intelligence and minds like those depicted in our science fiction? Yao Yuan, you're telling me our human technology has reached such an advanced level?"

Yao Yuan laughed. "If not for the fact I was there personally to witness and lead all of this, even I would find this hard to believe. Indeed, we human beings have improved a lot in these past twenty years. It is as you said, the AI is similar to the one we see in sci-fi movies, with just one minor difference. This AI is created by human hands and thus is heavily limited. We don't need to worry about a mechanical uprising. Furthermore... whether to create a large, robotic army is another topic altogether. Personally, I still feel it will be best if we can avoid that."

This was the recent discussion among the human government before they got sucked into the whole ruin dilemma. He didn't go into details as he didn't want to bore Jay, but Yao Yuan had worried too much, because the young man wasn't paying him much attention. He had wandered off in his thoughts, thinking about the gaming possibilities that could be brought upon with the AI. With his eyes shining, Jay breathed, "So, it is a real AI. I've heard that AI can create a realistic gaming world, one that is organic and vibrant, one that can evolve according to the player's decisions. So you mean that these kinds of games are a reality now? Wow, if that's true..."

Yao Yuan wisely chose to ignore Jay and instead turned to look at ZERO and the orb of light she was toying with. He grabbed it from

her and squeezed it slightly. It felt like a ball of cotton to his touch, lighter than a feather. Furthermore, the ball of light seemed to possess its own consciousness, because it floated off his palm, as if trying to escape his grasp.

ZERO immediately grabbed it back from Yao Yuan, berating him, "What are you doing? Don't you know he's a fragile child? And you call yourself his parent? He's still technically a baby now, so you have to treat him with love and care. Furthermore, you cosmic adapters better stay as far away from him as you can, it's not good for him..."

Yao Yuan started to think. He asked several seconds later, "Then how can you have a physical body? Shouldn't you exist in spiritual form as well?"

ZERO replied smugly, "How can you be sure I exist only in spiritual state in real life? Listen to me, even though the maker of this dimension can change it to however they see fit, the basics cannot be changed. If the foundation of the world is changed, the dimension itself will be changed. Therefore, unless it was for the purpose of some weird experiments, the basic rules are the same across all the illusory physicality dimensions. Since I had a physical body in the illusory physicality of my creator, why wouldn't I have a physical body here? The only reason I wouldn't be able to have one would be if the technological level of this ruin is greater than the technological level of my creator."

Yao Yuan memorized all this information in his heart. This was valuable information about god-tier space civilization. It might seem irrelevant now, but it would definitely be useful in the future.

(There are two hidden messages in this information. One, there is probably another dimension inside the UFO, and ZERO resides within it. Two, there is also a difference in technological level among god-tier space civilizations, but are they separated into levels? Could it be that they are also delineated into level 1, 2, 3, 4,

and so on like us? That sounds improbable.)

In any case, the hangar door opened soon enough. The small group of four took a transport shuttle out of the Hope. After taking a trip around the Hope to ensure there was nothing wrong, the shuttle travelled deeper into the ruin.

The area they were in looked like the interior of the giant tree. The floor was a writhing mass of tree roots and above them was a slate of darkness. The transport shuttle fired a light beam above them, and instead of a dark sky, they saw a wooden-patterned ceiling.

It really did feel like they were inside the giant tree, except the interior felt much bigger than what it seemed when looking from the outside. Caught within their sight were several hundred thousand spaceships of varying sizes and types. The bigger among them were space civilizations' motherships. The darkness stretched beyond the horizon, and it was impossible to tell how big the space was.

So, which direction should they head down?

Weirdly enough, when they were deciding where to go, other than ZERO, the remaining three reacted in the same way.

"There seems to be something there..."

"I feel like we should go there..."

"Something is calling me down that way."

The three of them uttered at the same time and their fingers were all pointing down the same direction!

Chapter 402: Time (2)

Homo Evolutis, or cosmic adapters, were equipped with an instinct that was commonly known as the sixth sense. All Homo Evolutis were particularly attuned to imminent danger, but the strongest among the Homo Evolutis type was definitely the Diviner, and the strongest Diviner was Zhang Heng. His prediction had a 100 percent accuracy rate; it was something not even science could explain.

Most normal Homo Evolutis, or in other words, the Homo Evolutis without super powers, also had superhuman sixth senses. This sixth sense improved according to level, which meant that when they reached the S-grade and gained a Homo Evolutis skill, then this sixth sense would be greatly improved. Other than sensing danger, it could be used to sense many more things. For example, an S-grade Homo Evolutis had a greater chance of winning the lottery compared to normal human beings. The most powerful Homo Evolutis with this sense were naturally the Diviners, and the most unique Homo Evolutis who could make use of this sixth sense was none other than little Eva, where the power of the sixth sense had directly evolved to the ability to see into the future...

Among Homo Evolutis, the Immortal, or the All-Rounder, was the most unique and rare. It was the SS-grade cosmic adapters that only appeared in myths. Even though the Immortal had access to all S-grade cosmic adapters' powers, they were incomparable to the original wielders themselves. Therefore, in terms of sixth sense, he was weaker than a normal Diviner.

However, at the end of the day, an Immortal was after all an Immortal. He was something as mysterious as god-tier space civilizations. He was expected to be useful at specified occasions and times, times... like now!

They were inside the ruin of a god-tier space civilization's

creation; therefore, Yao Yuan had 100 percent faith in his own instinct. The reason was none other than he was an All-Rounder... What about the Deceiver, who was as shrouded in mystery as the All-Rounder? Jay was a unique existence among the Homo Evolutis, and perhaps he too felt some sort of connection to the god-tier space civilization just like Yao Yuan did.

Therefore, when three of them pointed down the same direction, Yao Yuan didn't hesitate and took the shuttle down that way. Along the way, he asked ZERO, "By the way, I forgot to ask you earlier, is this illusory space big?"

ZERO rolled her eyes at Yao Yuan and said, "Even though this space was created, it is an actual cosmos. Then you tell me, is it big or not?"

The shuttle suddenly stopped moving and everyone within slipped out. Yao Yuan ignored them and asked ZERO in a chilling voice, "Meaning, we might need to search a space that is as big as a cosmos? Do you think I'm stupid or are you toying with me?"

ZERO shrunk back like she was afraid of Yao Yuan. She blurted out the answer in a shaking voice, "An illusory space is truly the size of a real cosmos... But we're close to the central control, which housed the central mainframe that controls this whole space, so searching this place shouldn't take too much time... I'm not lying to you, don't be angry for no reason..."

After Yao Yuan heard that, he continued in a gentler tone, "I'm sorry, I was being too brash. You have to forgive me because this is related to the survival of the entire human race, I couldn't be too careful... By the way, this central control you mentioned, it has to be the place that is most guarded, right?"

ZERO replied instantly, "That I cannot say for sure, because every god-tier space civilizations' styles and technological trees are different from each other. For some god-tier space civilization, their illusory space is a maze, while for others, it is a living

creation. Every illusory space is different. For those with an owner, non-god-tier space civilizations wouldn't be able to enter. In fact they wouldn't be able to realize its existence. However, for an illusory space without a master which was not set to hide itself... anyone could enter it should they wish to bear the risk. If they manage to take control of the central control, one basically has the control over the entire illusory space."

Yao Yuan nodded to acknowledge that he had understood it. This time it was ZERO who was shocked. She asked, "Do you not hear me? After you take over the central control, you basically have control over the whole illusory space. Can you fathom what that is like?"

"What that's like?" Yao Yuan thought about it and answered, "This place is just another set of numbers, is it not? Admittedly, it is more high tech than our current virtual reality device, but at most, it is just a space to conduct experiments, right?"

ZERO gasped. "Of course not, this is a universe in itself! A universe... Bah, you wouldn't understand it if I explained it to you. In any case, you have to understand that an illusory space is something only a god-tier space civilization can create. This is practically proof that you have evolved from a level 9 space civilization and have become a god-tier space civilization. If I explain it in terms that you can understand, an illusory space is the hallmark, the proof of identity for a god-tier space civilization. It is something that will only be abandoned when the civilization itself is dead. If you manage to capture this universe of illusory physicality... then you would have solved the issue that has been bugging you, humanity wouldn't expire anymore."

For humanity to be immune from the threat of extinction was indeed Yao Yuan's second biggest dream, his biggest dream being finding a blue life-preserving planet. That wish was a bit unrealistic, so the target he was actively working towards was to preserve the line of humanity in space. Of course, he didn't take

ZERO's words to heart. It was good that the illusory space could act as a guarantee for humanity's survival in space, but this was all hearsay. Until he could confirm all those details personally, he wouldn't bet all his money on it. After all, the first objective of this operation was to save the rest of humanity, who had been trapped within hypnosis. All the salvageable benefits would come later.

Even though Yao Yuan ignored her, ZERO continued talking to herself. "But this is weird. Since the giant tree spaceship is the entrance to this illusory space, it means that this high tier space civilization has mastered the technology already. In that case, why would they still leave behind a relic type ruin? Theoretically, there isn't anything in space other than a god-tier space civilization and high-ranking demons that can pose a threat to this civilization, and if they were truly destroyed by either one of those two things, then they wouldn't have the time to escape, much less the luxury to create a relic type ruin... this is weird."

ZERO's suspicion didn't resonate with the other three passengers on the transport shuttle, the main reason being the discrepancy in the level of knowledge. Then again, the trio wouldn't have time to entertain such thoughts anyway. The transport shuttle was carrying them fast towards their destination. This was a level 2 space civilization's creation. Its speed was faster than Earth's fighter jets, it had even surpassed the speed of an atomic bomb. In just a few minutes, the shuttle had brought them several hundred meters away from the Hope.

The area that they were in was incredibly huge. The several hundred meters of distance was like a drop of water in a great lake. The horizon remained a piece of darkness and their surroundings were still filled with different types of spaceships. This created the illusion that they were still staying at the same spot.

However, the three knew that was not true, because their hearts kept increasing in speed. For some reason, as they headed down that direction, the attraction that they felt before was getting more

pronounced. It was as if something important to them was calling after them. It was not the call of a friend or family, but more like... a call of something bigger than life. It was hard to describe in words, but if I have to try, it was like... the attraction of a bigger and greater purpose.

Of course, this is merely an analogy that barely describes how the three of them were feeling. Yao Yuan, who was piloting the shuttle, increased its speed and he felt his heart racing as the speed increased. When the shuttle reached its maximum speed, the three of them frowned in unison.

"Hey, I say, Yao Yuan, did you slow this thing down? How come I feel like we were travelling much faster earlier?" Jay, who was a personal friend to Yao Yuan, bypassed the military ranking between them and commented directly.

Yao Yuan was feeling the same way. He looked at the velocimeter and the shuttle was indeed moving at its maximum speed. If anything, they should've felt like they were travelling much faster than before. He was as confused as Jay because he too... felt they had slowed down.

"Could it be that the shuttle has broken down? That's impossible, this is military grade, it wouldn't have broken down so easily... Or the readings are off because we're so close to the central control?"

Yao Yuan mumbled to himself as he looked at the displayed readings. He tried to operate the shuttle, but no matter what he did, the reading remained the same. He immediately turned to ask ZERO, "ZERO, will a god-tier space civilization's technology do something as menial as messing with a shuttle's readings? If it doesn't want us to get any closer to the central mainframe, then it could have killed us directly, why would it lower our speed instead?"

Before ZERO could answer, Yao Yuan tried to lower the shuttle's speed. When the shuttle reached a certain threshold, the three of

them felt confused because now they felt like the shuttle was travelling faster than it was supposed to be. This was a curious sensation, one that made them feel nauseous.

"I say... You all felt that, right? What kind of feeling is this..." Jay whispered, "It feels like the space has grown, which makes us feel like we have slowed down..."

"No, it is time that has been changed."

ZERO suddenly said, "I understand it now. This illusory space is still holding a high-ranking demon captive. This is the spoil of war that belongs to the original owner of this space, or the god-tier space civilization that created this space. I understand it now, I finally understand everything now... why the high tier space civilization who had this illusory space in their arsenal would be wiped out and still have time to create this relic type ruin. The reality is that they didn't master this illusory physicality technology, they merely obtained it but didn't mastered it! This is wonderful, Yao Yuan, you now really have the chance to obtain this ruin!"

Yao Yuan looked towards ZERO and demanded, "What do you mean by that?"

ZERO didn't hesitate and explained excitedly, "This is an illusory space of a god-tier space civilization, and it is holding a high-ranking demon. You can control it to..."

"Wait, wait..." Yao Yuan stopped the shuttle directly because he felt a headache coming. He stopped ZERO and said, "Slow down, start from the beginning. I really don't understand what you're talking about."

ZERO pouted, but since she was rather afraid of Yao Yuan, she followed his orders eventually. "Fine, then I'll start from the beginning despite how troublesome that will be... Stop glaring at me, didn't I say I would explain it... An illusory physicality space is like what I mentioned earlier, something a level 9 space civilization

needs to master before it can become a god-tier space civilization. This is essentially the collection of all the technology the space civilization has mastered. Now why would the illusory space for each god-tier space civilization be different? That is the reason why. For example, a space civilization that reaches god-tier using genetics will have an illusory space that is a criss-crossing of flesh membrane or a giant beast. In other words, the illusory space is a sign of godhood.

"Now, the reason why god-tier space civilizations can bypass the limitation of the law of preservation of soul is also related to this illusory space, but even if I explain the inner workings of that to you now, you wouldn't be able to understand it. In conclusion, after completely mastering the technology of illusory physicality, one has surpassed the law of preservation of soul. As a god-tier space civilization progresses, so does its illusory space. This is not only the most powerful product of a god-tier space civilization, it is also the source of soul, the cradle of life and civilization. It also acts as the most powerful weapon and the last Shelter of a god-tier space civilization...

"I have mentioned all this earlier. Of course, god-tier space civilizations have their enemies as well, and they are the high-ranking demons. Normal space civilizations wouldn't have heard of this because their war is way beyond the physical realm of the cosmos. Of course, there will be losses on both sides. However, due to the nature of the demons, after their losses, they would normally be captured and sealed within the center of an illusory space to be used as an external source of energy and to modify the demon itself..."

The trio paid extra attention to ZERO's explanation. These were secrets of a god-tier space civilization. Human beings were merely a level 2 space civilization, but they already had access to such top secret information. However, Yao Yuan couldn't be certain if this was a good thing or a bad thing.

"Most modifications on demons end up in failure, but there are those rare cases that they are successful. They will either be kept as the defense system of the illusory space or cultivated as a new form as life. Regardless, if the modification is successful, then the god-tier space civilization will have acquired a great benefit. Of course, the demon who is in the middle of modification will be sealed inside the illusory space. Depending on the strength of the demon or demons, the exhaustion on the illusory space will be different. During this period, the power of the illusory space will be greatly weakened, and if the illusory space loses its owner, then even a non-god-tier space civilization would be able to obtain it. Of course, mastering it is a completely different thing altogether. They would have obtained an empty shell essentially...

"However, if a race can truly dominate this trapped, high-ranking demon, then it will have gained complete control over this illusory space. Even though the power of the illusory space is greatly decreased due to the presence of a high-ranking demon, it is still an illusory space, one that can be obtained and mastered!

"In the future, when humankind is powerful enough to seal this high-ranking demon away, then humanity will really become a god-tier space civilization... and at least until then, humanity will be a space civilization that possess the survival method of a god-tier space civilization. Even the Song of Destruction of a level 9 space civilization wouldn't be able to do any harm to humanity then!"

Now the trio finally understood everything. This was truly an impressive find! This creation of a god-tier space civilization was not something as pedestrian as cell phones or toilets, it was a sign of power, the root of their civilization. If Yao Yuan could possess it, then it would be as ZERO said... However, how to obtain it was a problem, and how to deal with the high-ranking demon was another problem...

The demon race itself was scary enough. A level 9 space

civilization was willing to unleash the Song of Destruction and destroy an entire solar system once signs of demonization were found. What about a high-ranking demon then... Just think about it, this was a force powerful enough to rival and even destroy god-tier space civilizations. Even though it was now sealed within an illusory space, humanity was definitely no match for it.

Even though Yao Yuan was interested in obtaining this illusory space, he was more worried about humanity's survival. Therefore, he asked patiently, "Since even a god-tier space civilization only manages to seal this demon inside an illusory space, I don't think we humans are powerful enough to deal with it, even if just temporarily... That is too unrealistic. It is as you always say, humanity is just a unicellular organism, so how can we deal with something as powerful as a high-ranking demon?"

To his surprise, ZERO started to laugh and she continued happily, "While that might be true, you are miscounting one very important detail: you. You are an Immortal. In your eyes, there is no falsehood, no demons, and no god-tier, there is only the stark truth. Others might be consumed or demonized when they go near a high-ranking demon, but you're different. Before you, even a high-ranking demon is no different from a normal existence!"

This was rather confusing. The trio seemed to half-understand it. Yao Yuan thought about it and he suddenly pointed at the ball of light on ZERO's shoulder. "By the way, you mentioned earlier that my constant exposure to this AI would stunt its growth and you seem to be afraid of me... Is it because I'm an Immortal?"

ZERO stammered and after a while finally answered, "You're right... Alright, let's not talk about that anymore. What do you think? You want to take control over an illusory space? This is something that is unfathomable by even a high tier space civilization." ZERO suddenly sounded smug when she said this, as if she was trying to remind Yao Yuan of her contribution.

Yao Yuan replied, "This kind of thing can't be forced. If it

happens, of course it'll be great... And it would be great for you too. Your contribution won't be dismissed if this does come into fruition."

Yao Yuan was being sincere here. Even though he was still cautious around ZERO, if ZERO really did prove that she had no ill-intention towards humanity, of course she would be duly rewarded should humanity achieve greatness in the future.

Then Yao Yuan continued to ask, "Okay, to summarize, the illusory physicality technology, high-ranking demon, and the current situation inside this space, I believe I have understood all of them now. Now I wish to know, why did you conclude that there is a high-ranking demon trapped here after noticing the change of the shuttle's speed? Do you know something that we don't?"

ZERO answered without hesitation this time, "Yes, because nothing is wrong with this shuttle or its velocimeter, I am perfectly sure about this. The reading of its speed is the shuttle's real speed. However, we did feel that the speed was slowed down, so there is only one explanation... the speed of light inside this illusory space has slowed."

Speed of light has slowed? The trio was confused. They knew about the speed of light and about the deceleration of speed, but combining the two was an entirely new concept.

ZERO noticed their confusion and she gasped with surprise. "Wait, don't tell me you people think the speed of light is constant? You're a civilization going into level 3, and you don't even know such basic knowledge? Fine... stop glaring at me, I'll explain it to you, okay? The speed of light is not a constant, it can be changed depending on the circumstance. Following the change to the speed of light, the unit speed will be affected as well. So what we felt earlier was not the speed slowing down but time has slowed down."

By then, Yao Yuan had gotten a basic grasp of things. In reality, he had been reading up on various scientific books. Even though his knowledge couldn't rival that of a real scientist, from a different perspective, he was more of a learned academician compared to most of the scientists back on Earth. His knowledge in science had increased tremendously, but he simply didn't notice it until now.

"So as the speed reaches the speed of light, the time around it will gradually slow. Therefore, the person in it might feel like a day has passed when in reality, on the outside, probably a year has passed already... You mean to say, the speed of light in here was already slowed when it was created? But just how slow it will have to be for lifeforms like us to personally experience the different flows of time?" Yao Yuan said with shock.

ZERO commented with a frown, "That might not be true. Generally speaking, most illusory spaces have similar rule sets to normal physical spaces. After all, a god-tier space civilization doesn't appear out of thin air, they also began their life as a level 1 space civilization in the physical universe. So they are used to the rules in the physical universe. Of course, acting as the owner of an illusory space, they can introduce any changes to the monitoring law, but... this is an ownerless illusory space. There shouldn't be a change in the speed of light... which is why I believe a high-ranking demon is sealed here.

"A powerful demon race with expert control over space, time, and gravity!"

Chapter 403: Message (1)

What exactly is a demon?

The topic once more returned to this. However, ZERO had been avoiding giving the answer no matter how harsh Yao Yuan was. In the end, he only managed to squeeze out a sentence through her tears.

"It's not that I don't want to tell. Unless I am completely free from the illusory space I am in, the UFO's self-defense will automatically activate if I reveal certain sensitive information to you humans... You humans must find the answer to this question on your own, I cannot give you the answer unless you wish to die."

When she said that, the trio broke out in cold sweat. Indeed, ZERO was ZERO, and the UFO she was in was an isolated entity; the two were not one and the same. If ZERO was telling the truth, and the UFO would destroy the Hope if she revealed certain information, then it was truly frightening.

"Therefore, I can only say this: demons are not living creatures, they are an existence, they are not unlike the demons mentioned in your human bible..."

The trio got into their own thoughts after hearing that. In reality, this was not the first time Yao Yuan heard that description, but he didn't have time to ponder about its implications before. At the time, he hadn't even met an actual demon, but now that he was reminded of it, many different observations formed in his mind.

First, the demons in the bible were created by God. Let's assume this God was a figurative existence, like the Dao in Daoism. In any case, for the sake of this thought experiment, it is not the "God" in the common understanding, that was merely a lifeform with a grasp of higher power, not something ZERO was talking about.

In that case, demons originated from nothingness and not

something with form, a form which then created the universe just like how God used seven days to create the universe in the bible... wait!

Yao Yuan, who was piloting the shuttle, suddenly turned around, surprising the other two who were deep in their thought and ZERO, who was just blanking out. He ignored them and said, "When you say the demons are similar to their depiction in the bible, then... what about the other depictions? Or should I say, the bible also writes about God creating the world, humanity, and angels. So what about those? Are they real as well?"

ZERO was stunned. She sat there quietly and started to think. After a long while, she replied, "You're basically right... they are real, but there are no angels because the angels are the demons."

"Is that so?" Yao Yuan took a deep breath and said, "Then let me conclude and categorize what you've said so far. You are trying to implicate that there exists an ultimate thought which created the world and the demons?"

"Wrong!" ZERO immediately retorted. "That's wrong because the universe is the universe, its creation and operation follows the foundation of physics according to force, energy, space, and time. It is not controllable by a thought; the universe itself is a formless existence and it doesn't come from an ultimate thought. In fact, there is no such thing as an ultimate thought. The universe is the universe, just like $1 + 1 = 2$, it is the real formless existence."

Yao Yuan sighed, but he added with confusion, "But didn't you just say that Genesis and the demons in the bible are real... or I have misunderstood it?"

This time ZERO didn't say anything. Yao Yuan added after a moment, "Since the western bible contains clues to the demons' existence, is there a similar example in eastern philosophy?"

ZERO added, "Of course there is. The Pangu [1] is a perfect

example, the myth of Nu Wa is another. Also, think about the stories of cultivation where people turned into demons as their hearts caused them to stray from the righteous path, that is also a manifestation of the demonic energy. I cannot say anything more than that."

This time Yao Yuan was even more confused. They had more clues to go on with, but they were all half-clues. There was not one unifying thread that strung them together, so how could they possibly get to the correct answer from these?

He reverted back to the question that started it all: what is a demon? All of the clues seemed to point towards this question, so if this question was answered, then the rest of the clues would make sense.

So what is a demon?!

Yao Yuan was using his Thinker power so much that he felt some measure of pain in his brain. However, he could not come up with nothing, not even the shadow of an answer. Finally, he gave up. After all, humanity was currently a level 2 space civilization, they were simply too far away from talks of demons and the universe. At least until they became a mid tier space civilization, they wouldn't have to worry about demons, so thinking about them now was pretty useless. Perhaps the answer would reveal itself when humanity reached a certain level.

The group continued on their journey. As they moved forward, the feeling of slowing down got more pronounced. In the end, it felt like they had returned to Earth's speed and their surroundings were moving away at several hundred kilometers per hour. The group started to get impatient.

Regardless, at least they were still moving forward, and finally a bright mist appeared down the horizon. It was probably the entrance to the central control. The group was excited, but the feeling of something being amiss was getting stronger. They

realized that no matter how fast they travelled, the mist still remained at its original position; it didn't seem like they were getting closer to it at all. It felt like... their transport shuttle had gone immobile.

The group was extremely sensitive to this, so they realized that something weird was going on immediately. However, when questioned, they couldn't put their finger on what was wrong. Without a better knowledge of stuff, they could only conclude that either the rules of the illusory space had changed once more or some of high-end technology was preventing them from moving forward.

As the transport shuttle continued moving forward, the group finally realized what was wrong. Their surroundings had suddenly become huge, making them feel like they were looking from the perspective of a bug.

"This isn't right, we have gotten smaller." Yao Yuan suddenly stopped the shuttle. They looked out the window and realized with a start that the spaceships around them had become unusually big. Even though it was hard to get an accurate reading of size from sight alone, the difference between now and before was so obvious that one didn't need a device to tell the difference.

Yao Yuan gritted his teeth and jumped out of the shuttle. He ignored the curious gazes of his crew and walked towards the mist. He merely moved ten steps away, but in the eyes of the group, he slowly grew bigger, and he was already 8 to 9 meters tall, looking like a typical metallic giant.

The group was shocked. Yao Yuan turned back to look at the shuttle, which was the size of a model car, and sighed. When he walked back to the shuttle, he shrunk. Then he explained, "The space has changed. The closer we get to the central control, the smaller we become, and that's not all... I fear the shrinking is proportional, as in related to the distance. The closer we get to the central control, the smaller we will become, so technically, we will

never get to the central control, because this short distance is essentially the size of a universe."

This was a simple math calculation. This type of scaling down meant that even a distance of a meter could be as large as a universe. They were still so far away from the mist, and perhaps the transport shuttle would need to go on at maximum speed for a billion years before it could reach their destination.

Everyone turned to look towards ZERO. After all, she was the most knowledgeable regarding this.

"There is of course a solution," ZERO said in a tone that implied that she needed some begging and praises before she would say anything.

Yao Yuan didn't say anything, but the nervous Jay piled on the praises immediately. ZERO eventually nodded satisfactorily and said, "That will depend on you. Your Homo Evolutis power is as powerful as the Immortal after all. For you, the power of deception affects more than... the human heart."

Jay was confused. He pointed at himself and said, "Me? I know I can spin some lies, but what does that have to do with this situation we're in?"

Yao Yuan, though, seemed to have understood something. He pulled Jay aside and said, "Do you still remember the things that happened on the meteorite base before you collapse?"

Jay nodded and Yao Yuan continued, "I believe I understand what ZERO means. Your power of deception belies scientific explanation... but it is true that you can deceive even non-living things. You still remember how you lied to the crystal reactors, right? I believe ZERO is referencing that as well...

"You have to lie to this illusory space, to trick it into making this space normal again."

This order was so curious that Jay took a long time to process it

before he finally said, "Wait, you want me to lie to a space? Hello, Yao Yuan, have you lost your mind? How am I supposed to do that? You want me to yell to this space, saying 'please return the rules of this place back to normal?'"

When Jay finished that, the transport shuttle grew in size at a speed that was noticeable to the naked eye. In fact, the group also slowly returned to their original sizes. Yao Yuan retracted his shocked gaze and said seriously,

"Yes, exactly, just like that!"

Chapter 404: Message (2)

Jay really wanted to scream out loud. This was all f*cking unrealistic!

Even though he had seen many things since he woke up, like the new the Hope, the startlingly fast transport shuttle, the so-called exoskeleton space armor, and many more things that were unscientific, the most unscientific thing of all was that he had just tricked space...

When the transport shuttle continued to move forward, Jay raised his two hands and looked at them with shock. After a long time, he said blankly, "I just f*cking tricked a slice of space, what the f*ck just happened..."

Yao Yuan, who was at his side, added, "You saw what happened yourself. Looks like your power is unusually strong, you better get used to it soon because I can see that we will need you for many instances in the future."

Jay continued to blank out until he said suddenly, "A chocolate rain will fall here!"

...and nothing happened.

"How about... It will rain gold coins!"

Still nothing happened...

"Beautiful girls will fall from the sky!"

There was still nothing...

"I will become God..."

"The only thing you've become is crazy," Yao Yuan chided him.

ZERO laughed and said, "Your power doesn't work that way. To put it simply, for a lie to work, you must first be able to believe it yourself. This is the first condition. If you don't buy it yourself, how are you going to convince others? The second condition is it

has to be natural or at least logical in your mind. For example, the situation just now violates your sense of the logical world, it is an anomaly in a way, and thus in your mind, it was not supposed to happen. Therefore, you were able to use your power to correct that anomaly easily."

"Is that so..." Jay thought about it seriously, and uttered in a deeper tone than before, "I shall become God..."

"...You shall become God of the crazies indeed..."

The group got closer and closer to the light mist. When the shuttle finally reached the edge of the mist, they got a clearer picture. The mist was thick and it covered a space that was incredibly wide. It was impossible to tell how deep the mist was, because they could only look beyond about 2 meters of the edge before everything was swallowed up by the mist.

The weirdest thing was that there was not even one spaceship within the several thousand kilometers of this mist. All of the spaceships were placed far away from the mist.

"What now? Do we go into the mist just like that?" Jay lounged lazily in the chair and sighed half-heartedly. "Will there be some kind of monster waiting to ambush us inside? This is too much like the plot of a scary movie after all... By the way, could this be an illusion as well? Yao Yuan, can you look past the mist?"

"No, I can't. This is an actual mist." Yao Yuan jumped out of the shuttle and managed to catch a glimpse of Jay laying sprawled in the chair. He sighed and said, "Let's stop for food first. We've been moving for more than 10 hours already; I'm sure everyone is hungry and tired, right? After all, time is flexible here. Let's take a 2-hour rest, we will continue the exploration into the mist after that."

"Finally, I've been waiting for you to say for so long..." Jay immediately leaped off the chair with a burst of energy. He took off his space helmet and laughed. "Let me see how human cuisine

has changed over the years!"

He might've been putting on a light-hearted front, but Yao Yuan could tell the heavy pressure Jay was under. After all, he was merely a normal civilian who had not been gone through years of military training... Asking him to put his life on the line and travel into an unknown space was a stressful enterprise, as it would be for anyone.

Two hours later, they finished their meal, and with Yao Yuan's request, they double-checked each other's ammo and equipment before they headed into the mist in the transport shuttle.

The group was silent as they looked at the mist before them... Granted, they could only see 2 meters before them, so they couldn't really tell what was in there. At least the mist seemed to fluoresce, meaning they wouldn't need to turn on the lights.

After an indeterminate amount of travel, as time seemed to lose its meaning inside the mist, Yao Yuan found himself standing amidst a state of nothingness. The mist that seemed to envelope him earlier disappeared and he was instead surrounded by space and stars. The space seemed to stretch to an infinity and he couldn't spot the horizon.

Yao Yuan moved his limbs subconsciously and realized that there was nothing wrong with his body, he could move around just fine. However, there was a sense of weightlessness to his movements. According to the reading on his space armor, he was in actual space with real space radiation. He had found himself back in the real physical universe.

"What's going on? Have I escaped from the illusory space? Then what about the Hope? What about humanity?" Yao Yuan started to panic. However, before he could figure out a plan, a voice spoke in his mind.

"This is where our race was born. If translated using the information stored in the user's brain, it is called Galaxy XRZNA-

37310. We call it the land of birth.

"This is a small, insignificant solar system. The number of space civilizations birthed by this system is low, there was only us. It was a relatively peaceful space...

"If calculated using your race's unit of time, our race left our home planet about 34,000,000 years ago. We evolved from a prehistoric race into a space race. We've been to upwards of several thousand solar systems and were in several space wars of varying sizes along the way. Finally, about 1,200,000 years ago, our race finally became a level 8 space civilization. At that time, a secret was revealed to us. If one intends to reach the peak of level 9 space civilization, one has to return to the solar system one's race was born in. If the solar system had already been destroyed, then the race would never reach the peak of level 9 space civilization.

"Thankfully, this solar system was a peaceful place. There were no worthwhile minerals or places of interest. In the several million years we've spent back in our home planet, there was no space incident big enough to warrant the destruction of this place. Therefore, we believe our race will be able to reach the peak of level 9 space civilization without accident.

"However, we didn't expect the coalition of more than 10 level 9 space civilizations who arrived to suppress us. They wished to destroy this land of birth. How could we allow that to happen? This was the key that would help us become a level 9 space civilization, the cradle of hope for our entire civilization, so naturally we rejected them."

Just as the voice appeared in Yao Yuan's mind, the space around him started to change. First, he was given a close-up of a glittering blue planet. Several spaceships departed from it as a neutron star fragment hurtled towards it. Just like the fast-forward in movies, Yao Yuan was given a glimpse of one of the spaceships' history. After leaving the solar system, they were assaulted by a group of asteroids. Then, since this was the first time they had ventured

beyond their solar system, they didn't prepare enough supplies. Due to the lack of supplies or differences in governing policies, there was infighting.

However, this civilization was certainly lucky, because just as they were going to go extinct due to infighting, they stumbled across a fragment of a terrestrial planet. It seemed to be a giant fragment of a terrestrial planet that had left its original orbit during celestial movement.

This civilization managed to acquire the materials that they needed from the fragment, so the infighting ceased. With the unity of the whole civilization, they managed to build an incredibly huge space fort on this planet fragment and continued on their journey...

In the end, the civilization reached an unoccupied solar system. They attempted to cultivate one of the planets into a life-preserving planet, but unfortunately, their effort of several thousand years failed. By then, the last of their cosmic adapters had died from old age, and they stumbled across the real threat of any space civilization... racial senescence!

Thankfully, lady luck seemed to be smiling their way, because another level 2 space civilization had entered the solar system to harvest it. A war broke out between the two parties and, using their own technology that was also from the level 2 space civilization and the secret weapon that was hidden inside the space fort, this space civilization won the hard-fought war. However, after the war was concluded, they realized with a start that there was a batch of new cosmic adapters among their babies.

The whole universe was playing out the history of this space civilization.

Yao Yuan saw the history with his own two eyes, from their initial struggle to their later progress as they moved step by step up the space civilization levels. Even though there were many things

that he wasn't supposed to understand, there was a voice in his head that enabled him to understand everything instinctively.

The universe continued to move to show their history until this civilization returned to the solar system that birthed them. Suddenly, one particular spot of this solar system started to implode as if a sinkhole had opened up and the space was falling into it. It was then that Yao Yuan heard that music again...

It was the Song of Destruction!

"We managed to stop the Song of Destruction, but in the end, we failed. All traces of our existence were wiped by the coalition of level 9 space civilizations, except for this...

"We didn't dare to leave any one of our citizens or technology behind, because they would simply be hunted down by the coalition and destroyed, but we have this, this is our only hope...

"This is something our race once obtained in our long journey. We do not know what it is or who created it, we can barely tell whether it is naturally-occurring or man-created, but we do know that it is something even a level 9 space civilization hasn't mastered!

"Chosen one, you have won the right to inherit this relic ruin, and we only have this thing left, an illusory universe! Take it, use it to grow, help us take our revenge and revive us, and we will be your most loyal servants..."

When the voice disappeared from Yao Yuan's mind, the universe around him disappeared as if a veil had been lifted and he could see everything clearly again...

Chapter 405: Mecha God! Granzon!

Before Yao Yuan's eyes was a large hall the size of a football field. However, when compared to the openness of the universe, it was extremely small.

The hall even felt more cramped thanks to the various mechanical paraphernalia like cogs, parts, gears, and wheels that covered the four walls. It gives the impression that they were inside some kind of mechanical structure. Yao Yuan could feel his eyes getting blurry, following the different turning motions of the many different gears in the room.

The one true eye-grabbing feature though was a small tower situated in the middle of the room. The tower was only four to five meters tall, its width about the size of three to five grown men standing side by side. The whole tower was made up of complicated cogs and gears. Yao Yuan used his Seeker power to study the construction of this tiny tower from afar. When he used his power to look in closer, he was shocked to realize that even the cogs were made up of millions of tiny cogs. However, all of the cogs formed a structure that turned harmoniously as if they were each obediently following each of their own rules.

This little tower gave the sensation that the hall itself was alive, capturing Yao Yuan's attention fully.

"Hey, have you seen enough?"

Suddenly, a female voice said to bring Yao Yuan out of his reverie. Yao Yuan's heart jumped. He was a specially trained soldier, so his focus wouldn't be moved under any circumstances, but he had indeed lost his focus examining a bunch of wheels and cogs. If not for the voice that had brought him to attention, he probably would have kept on examining it, and he wouldn't have realized that a knife was heading towards his body. How scary was that thought!?

Yao Yuan turned towards the voice and saw ZERO and the rest of his group. Then he heard ZERO say, "Stop looking at it. I know you're an Immortal, but everything here is real. Furthermore, you're just a level 2 Immortal, you wouldn't have been able to see the truth of a god-tier space civilization anyway... But I'm surprised. Even though a mechanical civilization is the most common among god-tier space civilizations, this is of the rarest Gear Technological Branch. The overall power is still weak, but this means that it is an opening for us, which explains why a high tier space civilization was able to operate the power of this illusory space..."

Yao Yuan waited until the trio walked to his side to ask, "You all have seen the messages, right? Also, ZERO, I want to ask, how is this god-tier space civilization compared to the god-tier space civilization inside the Hope's UFO?"

ZERO huffed with derision. "There isn't even a match, the difference between the two is unbridgeable. Regardless, for humanity, both of them are a standards that cannot be reached. However, you should be thankful that this god-tier space civilization is so much weaker than the one on the Hope, because now at least you have a chance to acquire it."

Yao Yuan agreed with ZERO. The UFO inside the Hope still baffled the Academy and it even managed to maintain its three dimensional form in the fourth dimension, this was something way beyond humanity's scientific comprehension. In comparison, the god-tier space civilization that was responsible for this illusory space was much better. If anything, Yao Yuan wished that this illusory space wasn't a god-tier space civilization's technology. He would have settled for it being a high tier space civilization's technology, or better yet, the technology of a middle tier space civilization because at least that way, the Hope could adapt it into its system seamlessly. After all, one bird in hand was better than two in the bushes.

Yao Yuan didn't answer but turned once more to look at the tiny tower. This time, he asked as he observed the construct, "Then, what shall we do now? How do we take control of this illusory space? Is this small tower the central control?"

"Nope," ZERO shook her head as she answered, "This hall we're in is the central control. The hall is merely one of its forms. After you've taken control of this illusory space, this can be anything you want it to be. Regarding this small tower, I'm not familiar with the technology of a Gear-based civilization, but if I have to guess...

"This is probably the prison for the high-ranking demon!"

Just as ZERO finished that statement, the voice again began in everyone's minds. "This here is the control center of the thing we found. This thing is incredibly weird, its interior seems like it grew naturally, since there is no sign of mechanical forging or creations. However, it is filled to the brim with high-end technology. This is something even a level 9 space civilization couldn't master, much less create..."

After the voice finished, under everyone's gazes, multiple green vines grew out of every corner of the hall. The vines climbed all over the place like little green snakes. In barely a second, the hall was covered with plant-life, giving the hall a weird look. The retro-looking gears' surfaces were curled with tiny yet sprawling green vines. It had a feeling of great technology being swallowed up by nature.

However, in this scene that looked right out of steampunk movie, after the green vines appeared, some of the gears started to glow in indeterminate colors and brightness. While the group was blinded by the sudden glow, the hall and the tower started to expand in size. Starting from the initial several meters, the tower grew to several ten metres, then finally stopped at several hundred meters.

Before the group recovered from the shock, the scenery started to change again. The vines that covered the hall started to

congregate, forming into a tree that was several hundred meters tall. The group looked on as it fell upon the tower, creating a giant glow. The glow was so sharp that they could barely open their eyes. Thankfully, the glow soon disappeared. When they opened their eyes again, the big tree had already wilted. It started to crumble into dust before disappearing altogether.

On the other hand, the tower started to operate. The gears all around it started to move and several seconds later, the tower split into two, revealing the thing within...

It was a giant blue robot with red equipment. Its height was at about 120 meters. It looked heavy and impressive, not unlike the mecha robot those pilots operated in the sci-fi anime "Gundam."

Yao Yuan frowned with confusion because he didn't see any demon. There was only this robot. Was the demon sealed away somewhere else? Was this robot the real reward of the level 8 space civilization and not the whole illusory space as he thought?

While it was merely a normal robot in Yao Yuan's eyes, for others in his group, including ZERO, they saw a ball of light with the colors red and blue clashing within itself. There was even occasional roaring. They merely took a few glimpses at it before a mounting headache assaulted their brains. ZERO collapsed to the floor with a scream and the ball of light on her shoulder blinked in and out of existence, like it could be extinguished at any moment.

When Yao Yuan noticed their reactions, he asked immediately, "What's wrong? Are we being attacked? What's happening?"

When the sound of Yao Yuan's questions drifted into the group's ears, the headache disappeared instantly and the blue-red thing trapped inside the tower changed into the thing Yao Yuan had been seeing all along, a giant blue robot with red accessories.

"That was too close..." ZERO said with great relief. "I've not personally seen a high-ranking demon, I've merely heard of them. I didn't expect them to be so powerful. I believe he knows your

existence is his biggest threat, so he aimed to dispose of us first. However, according to my understanding of high-ranking demons, it is very rare for them to expose themselves so openly. Once they are trapped inside an illusory space, they often choose the battle tactic of slow corruption and not direct assault like what happened just now..."

"High-ranking demon?" Yao Yuan looked around with alarm, but he didn't see anything, he didn't even see anyone else. He once again turned to the giant robot in shock and said, "Is this one of the creations of the level 8 space civilization? But it's sealed behind a pool of dark matter, how were they going to access it?"

"No, this robot is the high-ranking demon, or I should say, a demon that is in the middle of modification!" ZERO explained.

At the same time, the voice appeared in everyone's minds again, "...Granzon, Mecha God Granzon!

"This is an existence of a higher plane that was sealed within this curious space. When our race obtained this illusory space, we also gained access to the information that was stored within, including information about this ancient presence...

"He is one of most powerful demons; he destroyed 3 god-tier space civilizations. However, he has also betrayed the demon race, betrayed Chaos, and became a target for millions of demons. It was the only reason he would end up being captured, his name is...

"Mecha God! Granzon!"

Chapter 406: Suppression and Supply

"This is the high-ranking demon?"

The group, with the exception of Yao Yuan, stood about 100 meters away from this demon by the name of Mecha God Granzon. They didn't dare to stand too close to it. Yao Yuan shrugged. Compared to the others, he hadn't seen the demonic form of the robot, so he wasn't afraid of it.

Then Yao Yuan turned to ZERO and said, "What now? This hall is the central control, but I do not think we humans with our current technology can fathom how to even control it. Those green vines are the technology of the level 8 space civilization, right? This reminds me, the spaceship is in the form of a giant tree, so is this high tier space civilization a plant-based civilization? In any case, how can I gain control of this illusory space?"

ZERO shrugged and said, "Normally, you wouldn't have been able to take control of this illusory space. Even though mechanical space civilizations are the most common and weakest among god-tier space civilizations, it is still a god-tier space civilization. The fact that it is holding a high-ranking demon means that most of its defenses and functions are down, which is why a high-tier space civilization was able to activate and slightly control it. Of course, that is under normal circumstances...

"But for now, it's quite simple. You'll need to suppress this high-ranking demon, and then however much energy, supplies, or programs are released by this illusory space will be yours to use. Since this is an ownerless illusory space, it will serve whoever saves it. Saving it is something not even high tier space civilizations can do... but you can!

"For normal civilizations, they could only rely on the vines of this level 8 space civilization to control this illusory space."

Yao Yuan looked unaffected on the surface, but internally, he

was greatly excited. If ZERO was not lying... then this time humanity had truly found itself a great reward!

"Then, how shall I go about suppressing it?!" Yao Yuan realized how shaky he sounded, but he didn't mind.

ZERO pointed at the robot and said, "Get close to him, touch him. Since you're an Immortal, you're different from us; therefore, you'll have to approach him to see beyond its physical facade to its demonic form. That way, you'll be able to exist in the same dimension as he does... That is a dimension occupied only by god-tier space civilizations and high-ranking demons, the ionic soul layer. If you manage to suppress him at that level, then its physical form will be suppressed as well. It's that simple."

It sounded simple enough. In fact, along the way, there was no combat or battle of any sorts. The adventure had been more surprising than dangerous, so much so that Yao Yuan wondered if this was a bit too easy.

So it looked like the real danger... came from the suppression of this high-ranking demon. After all, this was a high-ranking demon, and even though Yao Yuan had no idea what kind of existence that represented, a high-ranking demon was a force powerful enough to rival god-tier space civilizations. This was not something a normal space civilization could even understand, much less suppress, and yet now... he had to do it!

"Okay, I understand..." Yao Yuan looked at the robot for a long time before suddenly saying, "If I die... Jay Wales, should you wake up after leaving this illusory space, then I name you as the vice-captain of the Black Star Unit to assist Guang Zhen in building up humanity. If you are unable to wake up... Ming Ji Jie, relay my words to Guang Zhen. He will assume my position as the Chancellor of the human government and all my military responsibilities. Liu Bai will take over his original responsibility... over."

After Yao Yuan said that, he didn't feel as worried, because the space armor would record them as 3D images. That would be a strong enough evidence to enable his last order to be carried out on the Hope. Whether or not humanity would be able to survive his loss, he had complete faith in Guang Zhen's ability. He knew Guang Zhen would be a fair ruler, and that was enough.

In reality, his wish was for Guang Zhen to take over his Chancellor role and Ying to replace Guang Zhen as the vice-captain of Black Star Troopers and the commander of Defense Unit, but that was no longer possible...

"...Okay, wish me luck."

Yao Yuan strode towards the giant robot. Jay, Ji Jie, and ZERO watched on as he approached the giant robot and laid his hand on it.

At that moment, Yao Yuan felt his surroundings fall away, revealing a state of emptiness.

He could not see anything around him, it was not darkness nor light, it was not physical nor metaphysical. It was a state of nothingness beyond the dimensions of physicality and even... time. Yes, he had lost count of even time itself. He was unable to tell how long it had been, was it a minute, a hour, a day, a year, or even... an immortality.

Suddenly, a glowing explosion occurred in the state of nothingness. It grew rapidly, reminding Yao Yuan of the Genesis, creating something out of nothing.

Yao Yuan felt his head spin as he watched this unfold. He almost fainted from the incredible amount of information that surged into his mind. However, if he tried to focus on this information, it would simply disappear out of his reach. When he opened his eyes again, he had found himself back in the hall. However, when he looked before him, there was no longer a robot but a living mecha... okay, that sounded weird, but it was as if life had been

injected into the robot. He was "looking" at Yao Yuan. There was a noticeable lack of emotion in his gaze, but there was something deeper. It felt like he was trying to communicate with Yao Yuan.

"Do you have something to tell me? Or... is there anything that we can share between us?" Yao Yuan said immediately. For some reason, he felt like this demon's form was somewhat fake, or rather, the feeling this living robot gave him was just one of falsehood; it made Yao Yuan feel like he was dreaming.

In fact, many people should have experienced this before, the knowledge of a lucid dream. The experience where one knew one was dreaming and could sometimes even control the dream in ways that one wished.

That was exactly what Yao Yuan felt like at the time. He felt like this living robot was very dreamlike. He didn't feel afraid like ZERO and the rest of his group had felt. It was as if should he wish for it, the living robot would turn back to an immobile one instantly.

After a while, Yao Yuan didn't feel anything different, he didn't even see anything like the bright explosion anymore. In fact, he started to get impatient. Finally, with a full-body shiver, like one would get in a nightmare, Yao Yuan realized that the living robot had returned to its physical state.

After that, the trio, who had been standing far away, quickly rushed towards him. Before anyone could say anything, Jay roared, "You scared me, Yao Yuan. Aren't you tired after standing there for 7 to 8 hours straight? Also, the robot changed back to its demon form, and then to a ball of shadow, and then it came alive. In fact, it tried to attack you at several times, but it would always stop at the very last moment, and now he has reverted back to a robot."

"7 to 8 hours?" Yao Yuan was startled. To his mind, he had merely stood there for several seconds, at most several minutes,

but it had been 7 to 8 hours?

Before he could say anything, suddenly, the gears on the wall, the ceiling, the ground, and even the tower that had been parted into two began to move. As they turned, they emitted a glow that slowly gathered. Finally, the whole hall was swallowed by a bright light that forced the group to close their eyes.

"You did it! You've suppressed the high-ranking demon. Now we will see to what degree you have done the suppression. The greater the suppression, the more power you can gain from the illusory space!" ZERO yelled excitedly in the bright light.

Then Yao Yuan received the information that the illusory space transferred directly into his mind. The amount of illusory space energy he could use was... 0.00007 percent...

He didn't know how to feel about this number that also represented his ability to suppress the high-ranking demon. To be fair, he didn't even know how to suppress the demon, this was a knowledge that he would have to accumulate over time. With the increase in human technology and the accumulation of space information, he would find out more about the true identity of the Immortal and eventually learn how to completely suppress this high-ranking demon. When that day comes, this illusory space...

In the eyes of the remaining three, when the strong glow disappeared, they saw Yao Yuan being surrounded by a convoluted mess of shadowy gears. Their combination kept on changing and they didn't have a constant shape. They only congregated around Yao Yuan because the rest of them didn't have any gears around them.

"Then, firstly..."

The method to operate the shadow gears naturally appeared in Yao Yuan's mind. When he pressed one of the gears, the four of them instantly disappeared from the hall and appeared back in the Hope. They had been teleported across such a long distance.

"After that..."

Chapter 407: Inheritance

"That's right, I have obtained this illusory space..."

In a meeting room somewhere on the Hope, the group who had removed their space armors were discussing the issue regarding the illusory space. The ball of light was also with them.

"No, that might not be the whole truth. The more accurate way of describing the current situation is, until the original owner of this illusory space returns, another god-tier space civilization comes to dominate this illusory space, or another space civilization obtains a greater load capacity of this illusory space than I did, then I suppose you can say I have obtained this illusory space."

Yao Yuan scratched his head and explained the situation with a bitter smile.

Other than ZERO, the other two couldn't hide their excitement because ZERO had hyped up this illusory space too much. If humanity really obtained this thing, then it was an ultimate victory for humankind.

"But... the load capacity I managed was only 0.00007 percent. You can count for yourself how many zeros there are after the decimal point, and the functions that I am able to use are... practically none."

Yao Yuan continued to explain with an awkward smile, "I have gained part of the information about this illusory space. First, this space was created by a race by the name of Mo. The time of creation was about 70,000,000 years ago. After creating the breakthrough technology of Perpetual Gears Assembly, they became a god-tier space civilization..."

"Secondly, it was around 24,000,000 years ago that the civilization managed to capture this high-ranking demon by the name of Mecha God Granzon. They were defeated when they were

in the middle of modifying this demon, and that's how this illusory space became ownerless.

"Just like how ZERO described it earlier, most of the energy of this space is being used to seal away Granzon. Therefore, the percentage of suppression I can manage to induce on this high-ranking demon equals to the amount of resources I can use from this illusory space. Unfortunately, I can only manage a 0.00007 suppression rate at the moment. This 0.00007 percent includes the information about the history of this illusory space, its creator, and the technology storage of this Mo race."

The two who were grinning excitedly froze. With some lingering excitement, Ji Jie asked as the information registered in their mind, "Chancellor, does this mean that... the information about the Mo race is the complete 0.00007 percent?"

"Of course not." Yao Yuan shook his head. "But that is not far away from the truth. The functions that I can use at the moment include teleportation of less than 10 people to any location within the illusory space and removal of any lifeforms or civilizations that have a lesser load capacity than I do in this illusory space. Other than that, I am able to bring a group of less than 10 into the illusory space for as long as three months every 10 years, or use the function of the dark dimension for less than 3 years. Er, the so-called dark dimension refers to the dimension occupied by these people who are still asleep. I am able to draw their consciousness into the illusory dimension of the illusory space, where death is not equal to death, unlike this space we're in."

"Furthermore, if I do not use any of those powers, I will be rewarded with the power to perform a controlled warp every 10 years, or if I don't use that, I will be able to demolish any material within a $\frac{3}{10}$ light-second radius every 50 years... Well, demolish is not the correct term, it is more like pulling these things into the intermediate space between the physical space and illusory space and abandoning them there. That dimension is a space between

existence and non-existence, so technically, we wouldn't need to worry about them anymore."

The duo who started to get disappointed earlier had their interest reignited while listening to Yao Yuan. Regardless, Jay still chimed in to ask, "Isn't an Immortal extremely rare in space? You only managed to get so little load capacity after suppressing the demon, so don't tell me the level 8 space civilization had an Immortal that was more powerful than you? How else did they manage to draw so many space civilizations into this illusory space?"

Yao Yuan answered, "That is the next topic that I wish to discuss. The load capacity I meant earlier refers to the Immortal load capacity, or in other words, the resource level I have as the owner of this illusory space. It will never decrease. It will never increase either if I don't try to suppress the demon even if I do have a better method to do that in the future. Other than that, there is another load capacity by the name of contribution load capacity. Simply put, however much you contribute to this illusory space, the illusory space will return to you that much amount of resources. Unlike the Immortal load capacity, this contribution load capacity will fluctuate until it is completely depleted. I believe that this level 8 space civilization has collected the contribution load capacity over several billion years, and that is why they were able to attract so many space civilizations here."

Then Yao Yuan turned to ZERO and said, "Now I understand why you could lead the Hope on those controlled warps... There is another illusory space within your UFO, right? So you are able to pass freely between the illusory space inside the UFO and the physical space of the Hope. You have exhausted the contribution load capacity that you have collected inside that illusory space to lead the Hope on those controlled space warps, right? You have also mentioned that you cannot do anymore controlled space warps, and I believe that is because your contribution load capacity is now completely depleted, correct?"

After ZERO heard that, she grumbled with some degree of dissatisfaction, "You're right, I've exhausted all of the contribution load capacity on you humans. In exchange, I only ask for a physical body after you've become a high tier space civilization. That demand is not too high, is it?"

"It isn't," Yao Yuan sighed and confirmed.

In fact, when he found out about contribution load capacity and ZERO's sacrifice, the first thing he felt was guilt. He shouldn't have treated the girl so badly before this. Contribution load capacity was invaluable because it was a joint existence with the illusory space. It was not life, material, or spirit, it was the basis for all god-tier space civilizations. It could record a lifeform or a civilization's contribution towards it according to its own unique set of laws. The contribution load capacity was incredibly important. In fact, the amount of contribution load capacity ZERO had exhausted on humanity was enough to enable her to live on forever in her illusory space. In contrast, humanity had done nothing worthwhile for her in return, so humankind truly owed her too much.

Suddenly, Ji Jie asked, "Then how do we earn this contribution load capacity?"

Yao Yuan looked at her with approval. Indeed, under the condition where the Immortal load capacity wouldn't increase any time soon, what they needed to do now was to collect as much contribution load capacity as possible. As long as they didn't attract the wrath of the high tier space civilization, humanity was going to be invincible should they have enough contribution load capacity.

"First, the most crucial thing for this illusory space naturally is to suppress the high-ranking demon. Therefore, everything related to the suppression, including technology, messages, information, or even items will be able to be exchanged for enormous amounts of contribution load capacity or even a smidgen of Immortal load

capacity. The second method involves the technology that hasn't been discovered or recorded by the Mo race. It can even be a technology from low tier space civilizations. As long as it is not in the records of the Mo race, they can trade for contribution load capacity. After that, it's a collection of different space information, which includes biological information, demon information, universe information, or information about other god-tier space civilizations that haven't been recorded by Mo race before.

"These are the most effective ways to earn contribution load capacity. Of course, there are also some manual labor tasks that we can do..."

Yao Yuan shook his head with a frown.

"Manual labor?" Other than ZERO, who showcased a fearful expression, the duo was confused.

Yao Yuan explained, "You'll understand it better if I just show it to you..." His finger reached out to the air and the shadowy gears appeared around him again. He pressed one of them and the four of them disappeared again.

They then reappeared in a state of darkness. On one side was darkness and chaos while the other was light and a large construction made up of numerous gears.

"We're at the edge of this illusory space. Ever since its creation, an illusory space will grow alongside the god-tier space civilization that created it, and this illusory space... unfortunately is still too young, it is not even one million years old. This is because the Mo race was a young god-tier space civilization. Therefore, this illusory space is very small. In fact, according to the information I've received, the size of this place is about one-twentieth of a galaxy. Furthermore, this illusory space has stopped expanding. The reason for that is because, one, its owner has disappeared and two, most of its resources were expended on sealing Granzon. In fact, I was told that this illusory space is gradually downsizing, and

the smaller this illusory space becomes, the weaker the seal on Granzon becomes. According to calculations, in about 12,000,000 years, if we still haven't discovered a solution to deal with Granzon or stop the minimization of this illusory space, then this place will collapse... due to Granzon's escape and destruction.

"You see those gears? Some of them are coming loose and others have cracked. The so-called manual labor is locating these weakened gears and reporting them to the system. This mission requires the most manpower but provide the least contribution load capacity. If we're unlucky, the amount of resources we provide might even be less than the amount of contribution load capacity we obtain.

"Other than that, the other manual labor is to create new gears. This is probably how the level 8 space civilization collected so much contribution load capacity. It is tedious, but it is a constant source of contribution load capacity. Unfortunately, we are unable to do this... this is because we do not have the technology to build the gears necessary for this illusory space. We do not have even the simplest metallurgy technology to build a gear of this caliber..."

Yao Yuan concluded with a bitter smile, "Therefore, this illusory space that I've inherited, while it is extremely valuable and can be considered our trump card... it is going to be nothing more than a decoration in the foreseeable future."

Chapter 408: Arrangement

Even with such a great limitation, the illusory space was undeniably the biggest trump card at humanity's disposal. The crucial point was that its potential was so endless that even high-tier space civilizations would be envious of it.

Yao Yuan currently only had 0.00007 Immortal load capacity, but he could already access plenty of the illusory space's functions. As his power of Immortal grew and thus improved his ability of suppressing Granzon, then the Immortal load capacity would increase accordingly.

Just think about it, the technological and information storage of a god-tier space civilization, the various powers of this illusory space, just the ability to wipe out everything within a 3/10 light-second was already something akin to a cheat. And who was there to say they wouldn't be able to expand the radius to everything within one light year in the future?

Furthermore, there was the ability to conduct a controlled space warp every decade... what did that mean?!

That meant that as long as humanity didn't receive any external threat, it was impossible for them to fall!

It was truly as ZERO promised, this illusory space was truly powerful enough to be humanity's ultimate trump card!

"However, at the same time, this illusory space is also an unimaginably huge ticking time bomb... if it is ever revealed to any other space civilization that we have this thing... Basically, when the news gets out, it will be the last of humanity in space. Therefore, everything about the illusory space will be kept as the top confidential secret within the human government, a secret of the SSS level, the same confidentiality level as the information regarding the god-tier space civilization's UFO inside the Hope. This means that other than myself, only Guang Zhen, the members

of the Black Star Unit, as well as the leaders of the first ten Black Star Trooper units will have access to the information. Furthermore, should we need to expose the information to another party, it will have to get the approval of more than 80 percent of the existing members. Last but not least, this also concerns the three of you present here."

Yao Yuan looked at Jay, Ji Jie, and ZERO each in the eyes before continuing, "The three of you wouldn't have known this under normal circumstances; however, due to extenuating conditions, it can't be helped. Regardless, I wish for you to keep this secret to yourselves. Tell no one, not even your closest family members. Violators will be judged as humanity's traitors. Of course, I am subjected to this rule as well. I will not reveal any information to those that do not have the right to know, so I hope the three of you will do the same."

ZERO thought about it for a long time before asking, "Then... can I tell Xiao Niao?"

"No," Yao Yuan replied immediately. "I need to have a discussion with everyone who has the right to know before I can decide whether we can reveal this information to the Thinkers. Therefore, before we come to that decision, I hope you will not speak a word of this to him... ZERO, in my eyes, you're already part of humanity, so I hope you will not disappoint me, okay?"

ZERO pouted and nodded with disappointment. Jay and Ji Jie had no issues and accepted the order easily.

"Then we will need to deal with the aftermath of this relic type ruin," Yao Yuan sighed and said.

"I do not know how this level 8 space civilization originally planned to deal with these other space civilizations who lost, but from the value of the illusory space itself, I do not think they were kind enough to let them go easily. Furthermore, they did not have enough contribution load capacity left to utilize the illusory space

for a ruin-wide memory wipe. Perhaps a level 8 space civilization will have a product that can replicate that effect, but the civilization was dying when they created this ruin, so... the biggest possibility was, they were going to let things run their course."

It sounded rather innocent on paper, but there was a vicious glow when Yao Yuan said that.

"Let things run their course?" Jay queried. "Meaning they are going to keep on existing in the illusory space?"

"I'm afraid it's not so simple." Yao Yuan shook his head. "The only way to survive in this illusory space is to suppress the high-ranking demon's existence. For that, one needs the Immortal load capacity. Without that, the contribution load capacity will be exhausted instead. When the contribution load capacity left in the illusory space runs out, then the only possible result will be..."

"They will return to physical space?" Jay guessed with a frown.

"Annihilation... Or more accurately, tossed out of the illusory space but with no way back to the physical space. It is similar to the weapon I mentioned earlier, they will exist in the dimension between existence and non-existence, practically left in oblivion..." Yao Yuan said with a blank face.

"You have to understand that entering illusory space requires either Immortal load capacity or contribution load capacity, and leaving the illusory space to go into physical space requires the same amount of energy as well. This is the theory of energy conservation, and this means that all the remaining space civilizations here..."

Yao Yuan shrugged with a face devoid of emotion. "Other than the civilization that inherited the ruin, the other space civilizations will probably keep on surviving in the illusory space until the time arrives, and then... they will be annihilated. This is the most logical resolution because one, it will ensure that the secret of the illusory space will not be leaked and two, the level 8 space

civilization won't need to exhaust so much contribution load capacity if they do not keep these people alive indefinitely."

"In other words," Jay said in a shaking voice, his hand reaching for his mouth, "all these space civilizations, these billions of lives, they will..."

"Yes!" Yao Yuan roared, "You're right! They will all be annihilated! This is the end for them! No one can save, not even me!"

Jay's face was blanched immediately. He mumbled, "But this, but this... these are billions of lives, there might even be peace-loving and innocent space civilizations among them..."

"Their peace is reserved for them only! It does not mean peace with other races!" Yao Yuan grabbed Jay and forced him to look at the interior of the Hope. "Take a closer look! This is who we are! We are only humans! We are the smallest survivors of the cosmos! You've been asleep, so you do not understand what we've been through. Let me teach you a valuable lesson, the cosmos... is no place for the weak! And we humans currently are one of the weak!"

"Furthermore, even if I obtained the method to save them and could release them back into physical space, I... wouldn't do it!"

Yao Yuan announced in a frigid voice, "I am the leader of humanity, so I have to put the safety of humanity first! What do you think will happen? A big happy family of different space races? You really think lifeforms from different backgrounds can sit at the table and share a cold one without plotting the downfall of the other? Don't be naïve! Jay, you've not tasted the cruelty of space, but we have. We've been in space wars, we've been threatened, we've been framed, we were also once close to being wiped out!"

"It is not my intention to deny the value of peace and compassion, because after all, we humans are not emotionless robots, but before we can show other people kindness, we must make sure we will not regret it. So this time... You'll have to

forgive me, I do not wish to have any regrets."

Yao Yuan released Jay and he concluded, "I've made my decision. Other than humanity, all the space races here... will be abandoned!"

Jay was still pale, but he had nothing to say. After all, Yao Yuan was right, he was absent for most of the struggles humanity had faced throughout these years. In the end, he merely said, "Yao Yuan, I'm sorry. Please understand that I'm not trying to pressure you or anything. I just woke up and didn't even have the time to brush my teeth yet. My brain is still not working so well... Give me some alone time to think. By the way, do you have any cigarettes on you? Mind giving me some?"

Yao Yuan offered Jay a pack of cigarettes wordlessly. He took a few cigarettes and walked out of the meeting room. After the door closed, Ji Jie asked with hesitation, "Chancellor, he..."

Yao Yuan sighed. "Don't worry about him, because no one can save these space civilizations, this is already a confirmed fact. Instead of laying the guilt on him, it's better for him to think that I'm being cruel... Back to the issue at hand. From the information I've received, this level 8 space civilization still has some contribution load capacity left in the system. Unfortunately, I do not know how much exactly still remains, because the contribution capacity is not transferable. I only know that it is enough to enable us to escape the illusory space, because the level 8 space civilization's last message was for the victor to use the remaining contribution load capacity to do exactly that. Moreover, they said that there would be enough left over to initiate another entry into the illusory space should we need it. As I mentioned earlier, I do not know the exact number, but this will be our trump card. When humanity faces real extinction, at least part of us can escape into the illusory space.

"Another important issue is the dark dimension... It has been going on for years. I do not know exactly how long, but it is at least

more than 100 years. I do not know what still remains of the Hope, if anything at all. No matter the ending, that is all fake, an illusion at best. However, the feelings, especially animosity, that were cultivated during this time will not be fake. I am afraid that after they woke up, they will remember the things that happened in the dark dimension and will hold grudges... That will not be good for humanity's future...

"Therefore, before waking everyone up and removing them from this illusory space, I wish to use all the Immortal load capacity I have to conduct a civilization-wide memory wipe. I want them to forget everything that has happened in the dark dimension. Since this is a memory-wipe of a god-tier space civilization, even Homo Evolutis won't be exempted, and there will not be any side effects. However, this does mean that we will be unable to make use of this illusory space for the next ten years..."

Yao Yuan sighed before continuing, "After this, we will enter the star path and leave this galaxy."

Chapter 409: Star Path and New Galaxy

Guang Zhen was suffering from a great headache. For some reason, everyone on the Hope had fallen asleep after entering the giant tree ruin. A headache lingered after he woke up, and he had no idea how they entered or even escaped the giant tree ruin. Thankfully, Yao Yuan was not affected and, with the AI's help, had managed to pilot the Hope out of the giant tree ruin. That was how humanity had survived the ordeal...

Even though he felt like there was a crucial part missing... he couldn't figure out what it was when he thought about it...

In any case, the Hope was heading towards the star path. Guang Zhen was busy from the moment he woke up to make the necessary preparations. However, before his work could finish, Yao Yuan called him for a meeting.

Initially, Guang Zhen thought it was just a normal protocol meeting, but he quickly realized that something was out of place. This was because no Thinkers were involved in the meeting and even Bo Li was excluded. The only people in attendance were the Black Star Unit members and the unit leaders of the Black Star Troopers' first ten units... In reality, the total number of Black Star Trooper unit leaders who came was less than 10 because most of the leaders for the first 10 units of Black Star Troopers were originally from the Black Star Unit.

This situation was curious... Furthermore, the meeting was held at the meeting room near the Hope's central mainframe. In reality, only Yao Yuan and Guang Zhen knew about the existence of this meeting room, and since this meeting was held there, it must be about something extremely important.

"Everyone, before I proceed with the meeting, I have to remind everyone that the contents of this meeting have a... SSS confidentiality level. Therefore, anyone who leaks the information

of this meeting will be punished as humanity's traitor. Any individual who is not here but manages to obtain information related to this meeting will be punished in a similar manner as well, there is no exception..."

This was the first sentence that Yao Yuan spoke. It caused the room, which was chatting amiably among themselves, to go completely silent. Humanity's traitor was a serious crime. In fact, it was the most serious crime on the Hope after they left Earth. It was even more serious than crimes against human society or against the human government. As long as one was confirmed to be a humanity's traitor, one would be executed without the right for a plea! Anyone who committed this crime could no longer be considered a "human" anymore.

"What I'm going to say next will decide the future development of humanity's future, it will decide the trajectory of our development for the next several thousand or ten thousand years, and it might continue to be relevant until we become a god-tier space civilization or until we collapse... This meeting will be noted in the history records. Even though the contents will be eclipsed, the name of this momentous meeting is going to be... The Final Doctrine.

"The meeting contents are..."

When Yao Yuan explained everything, the room was stunned into silence. This was truly something beyond everyone's comprehension. They had survived for more than 100 years in an illusion? And their memories of that were all wiped?

The most important thing was, of course... the illusory space!

Liu Bai suddenly raised his arm to ask, "Chancellor, I have a question."

Yao Yuan nodded and replied, "Go ahead, I'm sure everyone has some enquiries. This meeting is not timed, we will be here until all your questions are answered."

"Yes, Sir..." Liu Bai weighed the words in his mind before asking, "My question is about the contribution load capacity... What kind of scale is it? Can you give us a clearer introduction?"

Yao Yuan thought about it and said, "It is not a concrete substance. If I really have to describe it, you can see it as some sort of credit or even H-coins. To put it simply, how much you contribute will be equal to how much you get in return; it is very similar to economics. However, the party we're trading with is the illusory space. In other words, if we are able to aid the illusory space, whether it's to help it suppress the high-ranking demon or help it grow stronger via the improvement of its size, technological storage, or information storage, then these will help us earn contribution load capacity. Other than that, contribution load capacity is not transferrable, but when we obtain contribution load capacity, we can set it as racial contribution load capacity so that members of the race can use it..."

Liu Bai added, "My second question is, is there a solid way for us humans to earn contribution load capacity?"

Yao Yuan shook his head with a bitter smile. "Currently, no... that option is not available to us at least until we become a middle tier space civilization... any more questions?"

Guang Zhen seemed to have just recovered from his shock. He asked immediately, "You've explained most of the thing about the illusory space, so there's not much to ask about that... But I wish to know, there were plenty of spaceships caught in the giant tree ruin, and there were some from middle tier space civilizations among them. How can you move the Hope out of there just like that? We've missed out on a large treasure trove!"

Yao Yuan continued to shake his head with another bitter smile. "The fact that we might not be able to undo their defense systems aside, there is a crucial problem standing in the way... Those spaceships have all disappeared."

"Disappeared?" Guang Zhen repeated with his mouth open. Not only him, the rest of the room was confused and shocked as well.

Yao Yuan shrugged helplessly. "Indeed, the spaceships of those space civilizations have all disappeared. Even though ZERO said the things that happened in the illusory space wouldn't influence their existence in the physical space, they have truly disappeared. I believe... they were all consumed by the illusory space. This means that either this illusory space is unique... or the information given by ZERO is false. After all, she has not used Immortal load capacity before, so her information on the illusory space might not be completely true."

Guang Zhen thought of it for a long time before exclaiming excitedly, "Isn't this better? We are unable to do anything against those middle tier space civilization in the physical space, but they are putty in your hand in the illusory space thanks to the Immortal load capacity. So you'll be able to access their technology easily, right?"

Yao Yuan sighed. "Unfortunately, when we departed from the illusory space, the contribution load capacity of the level 8 space civilization was exhausted almost to its end. In other words, the contribution load capacity left behind by the level 8 space civilization was depleted when I moved humanity from the illusory space to the physical space. Yes, there might be a small amount that remained, but it was not enough to utilize it to do anything else... I've been to the illusory space, and there is nothing there, all the other spaceships have completely disappeared..."

Even though the topic was rather heavy, the people present at the meeting were not like Jay, they were real soldiers, powerful soldiers even before they left Earth, so they understood the gravity of the situation and the necessary actions. After a moment of silence, Yao Yuan continued, "Therefore, we can forget about the technology of those space civilizations. To wipe out the 100-year-long memories of humanity that were spent in the dark dimension,

I've used all of the Immortal load capacity we currently have, and this means that we are unable to use most of the functions of the illusory space for the next 10 years. Regardless, it is undeniable that the illusory space is our biggest and final trump card. I don't think I need to repeat these words, but all the secrets regarding the illusory space and how to use the illusory space to its maximum capacity will be something we need to discuss in the future and must be kept in this room. Now, I shall propose three additional individuals that shall be given access to the information of the illusory space...

"They are Bo Li, Ren Tao, and Xiao Niao. Voting starts now..."

Time passed by really fast. It had been a week since Bo Li, Ren Tao, and Xiao Niao had been briefed about the existence of the illusory space. Yao Yuan had moved the image of the illusory space in physical space into the most secret place on the Hope... the room that housed the UFO. This room, combined with the internal defense regions of the Hope's central mainframe, were all listed as the Final Doctrine alongside the secret meeting. Other than the 10 plus people who knew about the illusory space, according to the rules, only the human president and vice president were allowed to know about it in the future.

At the same time, after leaving the giant tree ruin, the Hope had reached the edge of this galaxy. According to the surveillance device, they were nowhere close to any solar system, so they were officially at the fringe edge of the galaxy.

"So... This is the star path?"

The Hope continued its mission in the weeks' time, which was to locate the connection between various galaxies... the star path. Originally, people on the Hope thought that locating one would be incredibly difficult and it might take years to complete. Yao Yuan was even prepared to use the warp drive to fly out of this galaxy and perhaps survive for 10 years in between galaxies and then use the controlled warp function of the illusory space to hop to a solar

system.

However, to their surprise, the star path was ridiculously obvious. In fact, two days earlier, the Hope's long distance surveillance had picked up the trace of star path. It was a... no, this was an area humanity's current technology could barely understand.

Before the Hope, there was a glistening area that was indeterminately wide, and it was so long that they couldn't see the end on the other side. However, the Hope needed to get close to it before one could notice the giant light area. For example, several hours ago, the people on the Hope still hadn't been able to notice the star path, but now, almost everyone on the Hope could see the river of light with their naked eye. There was an impression that the star path looked like a laser weapon. After all, the "path" was extremely bright.

Of course, the Hope wouldn't just wander in without any preparation. With all of its surveillance devices activated, the Hope stalled for about 2 months beside the star path entrance. Even though humanity's technological level was still quite low, they could still theorize. Blue 6 was surprised by this. Based on theoretical understanding alone, humanity's scientific prowess could be considered to be even higher than the Blue Race's. And according to the Academy, the reason why the star path was so glisteningly bright was because...

"The speed of light in the star path is heightened. The more accurate way of describing it is that the speed of everything in the star path is increased, and these include ions, electrons, and particles. Under this condition, the distance remains unchanged but the speed increases. It is probably why the star path manages to connect different solar galaxies."

On the discussion-cum-conference regarding the star path, Silewei reported in summary, "Members of the Academy and the government officials present, I will try my best to use the lay

language to explain the situation... Due to some unknown reason, the movement speed of electrons in this region is about 60,000,000 times higher than their normal speed. Unfortunately, we are unable to get the actual number, the 60,000,000 is merely an educated guess, but it is fair to say that the speed of light inside this region is incredibly sped up compared to the outside.

"Under the condition that the distance between the galaxies remains unchanged, the moment we enter this path way, the Hope will fly ahead with a speed 60,000,000 times its current speed. Therefore, even if the distance between galaxies is calculated in several million light years, at most we will need several decades to traverse the distance. Furthermore, the time can be cut down even more if we utilize warp drive while we're in the star path. Therefore, this is scientifically plausible."

Instantly, someone in the crowd raised his hand to ask, "But Professor, what about the strong light in the star path? Can the Hope's defense system withstand the energy assault?"

Silewei replied instantly, "Mr. Reporter, unfortunately, those aren't energy waves. The bright light is actually caused by the appearance and disappearance of virtual particles in space. The increased speed inside the star path caused the virtual particles to appear and disappear at an improbable speed. The moment we enter the star path, the bright light will disappear. This can be observed from the surveillance devices that we sent, so you do not need to worry, this star path is completely safe."

The conference went on for a long time. Other than Silewei, other scientists posted their findings as well. Of course, the questions were varied. They came from reporters, other scientists, government officials, representatives from House of Representative, and even common civilians. After all, this was related to the Hope's survival, they couldn't afford not to be careful.

At the same time, in a meeting room on the Hope, Yao Yuan was

signing the proposal to enter the star path. Guang Zhen was sitting beside him.

Guang Zhen sighed with emotion. "The cosmos definitely is big enough to be filled with various curiosities. I remember reading in a sci-fi novel that some space civilizations slow down the speed of light in space to aid their travelling through space, and here we see a god-tier space civilization use some sort of travelling technique to cause the parts of the physical space to speed up by 60,000,000 times. This is incredible..."

"Yes, it is incredible."

After Yao Yuan signed the proposal, he gave it to Barbie. Then he turned to Guang Zhen and smiled. "This is just the beginning. As you've said, the cosmos is endlessly big, and we humans have just witnessed perhaps 0.0000000000000000000000000000000000000001 percent of it. Perhaps when we become a god-tier space civilization ourselves, we will have seen one over a billion percent of the cosmos."

"Indeed." Guang Zhen felt the same way.

Yao Yuan stood up and said, "Come, let's go have a drink or two... tomorrow, we'll enter the star path and head for a new galaxy, a new world!"

Chapter 410: Arrival and New Solar System

Half of the Academy still maintained a hesitant perception regarding the usage of the star path. They believed it was too dangerous, at least by humanity's current standards.

However, the other half of the Academy believed that the star path was the most suitable connection between galaxies. After all, it was a mature path trodden by many space civilizations already.

"Then how are we going to defend ourselves against the high speed of various ions inside the star path?" a physicist asked Silewei. "Do not try to use scientific terms to befuddle the fact, I'm also a physicist. If we really speculate using the data from the surveillance, the moment a lifeform enters the star path, it will be evaporated like it was trapped inside an oven! Furthermore, time is relative. Since the passage of time is 60,000,000 times faster inside the star path than outside, doesn't this mean that we will need to move from one speed of time into another speed of time when we enter this star path? We will be destroyed from the different time flows!"

The arguments between scientists were harsh, as were all academic debates. The weapons of choice were factual data and experimental conclusions. This was even more severe than political or religious debates because if one did not hold their ground in terms of research, then what was the point of doing science?

"Therefore, we cannot enter the star path just like that. Think about it this way: can a prehistoric car use a super high-speed highway? Or to borrow another analogy, can an ant move at the same speed as other modern vehicles on the highway?"

"That is why we need a 'vehicle' that can ride on this star path highway," Silewei said with a cunning smirk. "A 'vehicle' that can not only reach the maximum speed of this highway but can also

protect us from being damaged by the high speed."

"Vehicle? What kind of vehicle can ferry us humans across this star path? The Hope is not a good candidate, it is too unwieldy. Wait..." This scientist was not a normal scientist, he too was one of the traditionally-trained scientist who left Earth alongside Silewei. Instantly, he gasped in surprise. "Are you talking about space? Warp drive?"

"That's right! I am indeed talking about warp drive!"

Humanity still hadn't completely dissected warp drive's operational theory, but from known information, warp drive was indeed a technology that could only mastered by level 4 space civilization. For some reason, it was leaked into the hands of level 2 and 3 space civilizations. Even though its function was greatly simplified and its proficiency not even one over one hundred of the actual warp drive, it was still the only method available to low tier space civilizations to break through the speed of light.

The so-called warp drive didn't refer to the spaceship breaking through the limitation of light speed itself. From this perspective, light speed was indeed a limiting barrier. It was impossible to break through light speed in physical space, and whether this was something doable for high tier space civilization or god tier space civilization was still unknown.

Warp drive utilized the power of science to distort the space behind the spaceships, causing the space distortion rate in front and behind the spaceship to be different. This led to the formation of the "forward movement" of space. In other words, the spaceship itself was immobile, but the space the spaceship was in had moved. Imagine it as the space the spaceship was in was "cut out" and moved while the spaceship remained immobile in it.

According to Silewei, this piece of cut out space would be the vehicle humanity would use to ride this star path. Since this space didn't count as the space inside the star path, there wouldn't be

any interaction between the space itself and the star path. When the space entered the star path, the star path would act as a conveyor belt and "move" this space to the other end of the star path at 60,000,000 light speed. This was the answer given by Silewei.

The star path was indeed dangerous, but with the suitable method, it was truly the most efficient way of travelling through the cosmos for low and middle tier space civilizations!

The argument lasted for a month, and they were now one month later...

The Hope was already on the edge of another galaxy, and quite far away from the star path.

"Space radiation gradient normal..."

"No gravitational response within the radius of 10 light seconds..."

"Creator's particle scanning system normal."

"Triangulating the spaceship's location, siphoning more energy to the central mainframe..."

"Surveillance of star location completed, sending information to the central mainframe..."

Due to the huge distance between the two galaxies and the uncertain speed inside the star path, the Hope didn't quite know when they were bounced out of the star path. They were even still in warp drive state. In fact, the Hope didn't even know where they were now. According to calculations, they wouldn't need more than a month to cross the star path using warp drive, but beyond that, the Hope really couldn't tell when they left the star path, when they entered normal space, and how long they had been travelling through normal space using the warp drive engine.

Therefore, after exiting warp drive, the Hope immediately activated all of its surveillance devices. They wished to check

whether they were in a new galaxy by using the surrounding stars and other solar systems as basis. Of course, this was to detect whether there was potential danger from other space civilizations as well.

The calculation process was very complicated, even the Hope's AI needed about 8 hours to complete it. The wealth of information would freeze old Earth's supercomputers instantly. However, the result was exciting. It was confirmed that they were on the other end of the star path, in a new galaxy.

The Hope was currently still at the edge of the galaxy. According to surveillance, this galaxy was at least 10 times bigger than the one they were in before.

"Then... we shall discuss the future development of humanity."

After obtaining the surveillance result, Yao Yuan instantly called the Hope's high officials, about 300 of them, to attend a large scale meeting. There were government workers, people from the House of Representatives, and representatives from the three main factions in attendance.

"We can use space warp, but now we know space warp not only has its randomness, it also enables super long distance travelling. The current system we're in is already so far away from the Milky Way that we cannot even tell where it is. In the future..." The moment Yao Yuan thought about the prerequisite to become a level 9 space civilization, his brain started to ache.

"That is not important for now." Yao Yuan sighed and pushed the thought out of his mind before continuing, "Therefore, space warp is not a suitable space travelling method. At least until we can master controlled space warp, space warp should be treated as our last resort. We have the warp drive technology and can travel between galaxies. Furthermore, we do not have a mother planet and no branching ships. Even though this is a sign of weakness, it also means that we can grow without inhibition... and speaking

about that, I wish to ask everyone here, what shall our next direction of growth be?"

After Yao Yuan finished, the room started to get busy with conversations. In fact, before the meeting was called and they were still in the warp drive, the people all over the Hope had been talking about this topic.

Using the space warp to conduct random jump had the least support. After all, no one could guarantee what would be at the other end of the warp. That was an option that was open to humanity after they were starved of any other choices. Space warp was treated as the last means to escape by about 80 percent of the Hope. Unless they came up against an impossible enemy or a tragic cosmic catastrophe, space warp was not an option.

What about other ideas?

Some believed they should go search for a Shelter. Since no one knew of humanity in this new galaxy, the situation at the earlier Shelter shouldn't repeat itself. As long as humanity kept to themselves, there shouldn't be too huge of an issue.

Others suggested that they use Yao Yuan's power to look for life-preserving planets. Even if they could only stay there for three years, those three years would be like life in paradise... After all, many babies on the Hope hadn't even seen blue sky outside of movies and animation!

However, the majority's choice was...

"The Home Base Creation White Manifesto."

"Search for an isolated solar system and settle there. Using the materials provided by the solar system, humanity will focus on creating a new mothership, Kun Lun... At the same time, using Kun Lun as the base, humanity will create its own Shelter, and after that, if possible, manipulate the birth of a life-preserving planet using the wealth of cosmic adapters available to humanity.

"At the same time, improve humanity's military force by expanding the number of Defense Unit soldiers, increasing the training of the Black Star Troopers, and increasing the functions and number of Space Combat Jets. The main purpose is to ensure that humanity can stand up to any level 2 space civilization!

"The name of that cosmic system will be...

"New Solar System!"

Chapter 411: Search

The meeting ended with a 2/3 majority vote for the future development of the Hope and humanity... that was the Home Base Creation White Manifesto.

The contents of the book were numerous and varied, including the development of many different sections. The first step was to search for an isolated but not barren solar system. There were, of course, many criteria to the selected solar system. For one, it shouldn't be too close to the center of the galaxy, because that would be the congregation of civilizations, and that might pose danger to humanity.

The sun of the solar system had to be a healthy sun. In other words, it had to be stable and not something like a red giant. It had to be stable and wouldn't lead to any cosmic catastrophe in the next hundred or thousand years.

The number of planets within the system had to be more than five and at least two or more had to have meteorite belts. These would provide the materials needed by humanity for innumerable years.

The white manifesto was separated into many different sections, such as the plan for the building of Kun Lun, the building of Space Combat Jets, the expansion of the Defense Unit, increase of population, specialization of work, new education policy, cultivation of arts, and much more.

This manifesto was the collective work of relevant experts. It took almost a month to be compiled. In fact, most of the contents had been brought up years ago and this was merely a categorization process to make it official. The manifesto was demarcated into five big categories: selection of solar system, construction of military, construction of politics, construction of civilian technology, and the last category was confidential, as in it

was something hidden from normal civilians.

The fifth category was... the New Solar System defense plan.

Of course, these were far-fetched plans for humanity. According to current situation, completing the first step would take at least 10 years. That included selecting the appropriate solar system, building a simple Shelter, and creating the first of humanity's spaceship fleet.

After the manifesto was passed, it was time for the crucial first step, selecting a suitable solar system from the ones near the Hope.

"If the star path is 0, and horizontal as X, vertical as Y, 3D depth as Z, our current location is X31-Y17-Z42. We are at the fringe edge of the galaxy, so there are extremely few solar systems around us. From the result of the surveillance, the next closest solar system is about 0.32 light years away.

"Other observable systems are at least 50 light years away. We can still reach them using warp drive, but we'll be threatening the ship's supplies. Our surveillance also found out that three of the solar systems have some issues. One of them has a red giant, another is in an unstable state, and the third has a binary sun. Other than these three, the remaining solar systems fit our criteria.

"We conducted more detailed analysis and 8 solar systems remained, but unfortunately... the solar system closest to us only has 3 terrestrial planets even though it has 5 asteroid clusters. Other than that, since this solar system is closest to us, the surveillance result came back to be the most complete... One of the planets is very interesting, I believe everyone here will be interested in it."

On the fifth day of the manifesto, the Hope had scanned all the nearby solar systems and had gathered for a result-sharing meeting.

In the meeting, Alan was giving his report. A 3D image was projected behind him.

It was a planet that seemed to have a red surface. Using electromagnetic resonance technique, the Hope had captured all of its grandeur.

Alan pointed at the planet and said rather excitedly, "If compared to our old solar system, this planet will be between Earth and Mars. The general temperature of the planet's equator in the morning is about 30 degrees and it is negative 30 degrees at night. Everyone, do not be alarmed by the low temperature because in reality, for such a lifeless and dry planet, such a temperature is already quite sustainable for life to be born.

"At the same time, the electromagnetic resonance detected that the planet has an atmosphere. The air contains a large amount of carbon dioxide and trace amounts of carbon monoxide, noble gases, as well as oxygen and water vapor. In fact, we found small regions of ice layer at the planet's opposite poles. Granted most of it is dry ice, according to the prediction of the Academy, this is a sign that the planet has underground water. In fact, this planet has the conditions to be a life-preserving planet, but whether it is one is still unknown. Perhaps we'll need to land there to find out."

Alan could barely suppress his excitement at this point. He continued, "Instead of quantity, we should be focused on quality. You asked for a solar system with more than five terrestrial planets, but if most of them are at the edge of the solar system, like our Neptune, what is the point? Honestly, with the asteroid clusters available in the solar system alone, it can sustain humanity for more than 1,000 years. Therefore, isn't transforming a planet into a life-preserving planet a better option instead?

"For example, this planet, after we confirm that it has no life, we can start the transformation at its equator by creating one or even more cities. By introducing green to the planet and diverting the underground water to create lakes or mini oceans, we'll slowly

transform the planet's weather and atmosphere...

"We've lost our home, but does this mean we cannot rebuild a new home?!"

Alan's plea resounded with the room and he was rewarded with a thunderous applause. Indeed, creating a new home and ending the aimless wandering through space... wasn't that the dream of most human beings?

Yao Yuan, who was also present, smiled. He leaned to Bo Li beside him and said, "Who would have thought that Alan had such a talent in giving speeches... By the way, how is the Academy's inspection coming along?"

Bo Li shook her head emotionlessly. "There's nothing out of the ordinary, but this planet is actually not as good as he made it out to be... Well, it's not objectively bad, but it isn't fit for human habitation. This is because the gravity of the planet is 1.7 times Earth's gravity. Those with weak constitution will feel the extra weight. In fact, many would end up indisposed. He was clever not to bring that up, and transforming the planet into a place suitable for humans to live is going to be more difficult than it sounds."

Yao Yuan smiled. "Perfection doesn't exist in the world. If there is really such a perfect planet for human habitation, then at most we will be able to stay there for 3 years. In that case, I'd rather we terraform a new planet. It is extremely difficult to find a suitable planet for the purpose of terraforming, but we humans are truly lucky. For those with a weak constitution, we can have them undergo months of training in the space station first before allowing them to land on the planet. After all, it is a poor man's dream that we will have a perfectly wonderful planet handed to us just like that!"

Bo Li didn't reply and sat there listening to him. Yao Yuan scratched his nose helplessly before saying, "Since the Academy already has some ideas, then they should bring them up at the

House of Representatives. No matter the result, we will still enter this solar system, even just for supply mining. If the place is truly not suitable, we will move onto another solar system."

Due to the united front put on by the Academy, the criteria in the manifesto where the solar system needed to have more than 5 terrestrial planets was overruled. The Academy suggested that they use this closest solar system instead and rebuild humanity's home on this planet itself. This kind of opportunity couldn't be missed. They wished to make this solar system the New Solar System.

Alan's presentation lit up the fire among the citizens of the Hope. They didn't care about a solar system having more than 5 terrestrial planets, they only knew that the chance of finding a suitable planet for terraforming was less than one over one million. Therefore, the civilians were leaning towards the Academy.

The will of the people was reflected in the House of Representatives. Since the representatives were voted in by the people, they had no choice but to submit to the will of their constituents...

The solar system closest to the Hope was 0.32 light years away, so they would reach there in days using warp drive. Whether it was suitable to be the New Solar System or not would have to be seen when they were there. Thus...

The Hope entered warp drive, heading towards the solar system!

Chapter 412: Entry and Research

"Warp drive engine exhaustion 80, 75, 70... dropping steadily."

"Initiating flux propulsion system..."

"Activating creator's particle vibrator..."

"Preparation of Black Star Troopers complete..."

"I order," Yao Yuan sat in the captain's chair and said, "Exit warp drive."

"Yes, Captain's order, exiting warp drive."

"Countdown to exiting warp drive, 10, 9, 8, 7..."

"Exited warp drive!"

After a blue flash, the Hope exited warp drive, and the thing that was revealed before their eyes was a solar system... Of course, they could only see the sun as most of the planets were still too far away to be seen with the naked eye.

"Surveillance complete, there is no trace of creator's particle, gravitational reaction, or electromagnetic resonance..."

"There is no threat within observable distance."

"Diviners reported no sense of danger."

Yao Yuan finally sighed. "Lower the alert level to level 3. Power down the necessary defense systems and patrolling guard. The Hope will return to its normal situation as we operate the second step of the manifesto, moving towards the target planet."

After Yao Yuan had given all the orders, he went to the Black Star Troopers' headquarters, where Guang Zhen was in the middle of a discussion with the unit leaders.

"We've just entered this solar system and yet practically every civilian already knows what we're going to do next thanks to the Hope's a-bit-too-vibrant mass media. Do you know? I've been

trying to suggest to the government to control the media. After all, it won't do to have what we just discussed in the meeting this morning to be released to the public this afternoon, right? Alas, your commander is a stubborn mule, he rejected my suggestion..."

Guang Zhen shrugged and said seriously, "Alright, back to the issue at hand. As everyone knows, this solar system might be extremely meaningful to us human beings. Even though we are unable to confirm for now whether it will be our New Solar System, the possibility of that happening is more than 70 percent. In other words, this place will quite possibly be our new home base, the place where most of us will grow old and die.

"From tomorrow onwards, the Black Star Troopers will be delineated into five divisions. Two of them will be responsible for guarding the Hope and its surrounding area, while the remaining three will explore this solar system. Yes, you have not misheard me, I need you to leave the Hope and comb this solar system.

"The goal of this mission is to collect information on the basic details of the planets, like their gravity, atmosphere, and available supplies as well as note the important defense points within this solar system."

Guang Zhen paused to let the information sink in before continuing, "As I've mentioned earlier, if this solar system really does become our New Solar System, then this place will be our main base for the next hundred, thousand, maybe even ten thousand years. Thus, we need to find out which spots are suitable for the construction of defense spots, supply spots, and hidden bases. That is your mission objective."

When Yao Yuan arrived, Guang Zhen had already given all the orders. When the latter noticed Yao Yuan, he poured him a cup of coffee before adding, "Now all the Black Star Trooper units wish to go out and explore. This is not what I expected. It's a hard decision to make."

Yao Yuan accepted the coffee and frowned. He took a sip and said, "I'm sure you can come up with a solution. If it's really impossible, then we'll just use a rotation system. It might even be a good training opportunity. After all, the Black Star Troopers will need to defend the whole solar system after we settle. There will be plenty of occasions when we'll need them to fight outside of the Hope. Might as well let them get used to it now."

Guang Zhen laughed. "I know you're a tea person, but this is a new batch of coffee, you should have a change of taste once in a while... Either way, I believe this solar system is a good find. Even though the number of planets is small, there are plenty of asteroid clusters. Those are easier to mine and they form a natural defensive wall. What were those representatives thinking about when they said we needed more than 5 terrestrial planets? Do they think we have several billion in population? Do we need so many planets to house our population? Or are we humans creatures that survive on metals and we need more than 5 terrestrial planets worth of minerals to survive? They must be kidding."

Yao Yuan took another sip of the coffee. It was fragrant yet bitter, no sugar because that was Guang Zhen's habit. He didn't say anything but followed Guang Zhen's topic. "They have their concerns; after all, the civilians whom they serve do not know so many details. Isn't that how politics work? At least for the Hope's civilians, more terrestrial planets equal more materials and supplies, which brings about more occupational opportunities. The representatives are thinking about the civilians' profit and benefits, so we cannot really blame them. After all, when the Hope was lacking in supplies and was rationing them, even you and me didn't have the heart to smoke that additional cigarette each day, much less the normal civilians, so you can see where their decision is coming from."

Guang Zhen scoffed with derision, but he didn't retort. After a long time, he said, "It's almost noon, let's go have lunch and then

go to that place."

Yao Yuan didn't argue, that was the purpose of his visit after all. Other than to check up on the progress of the Black Star Troopers, it was to visit that place with Guang Zhen...

After lunch, Yao Yuan and Guang Zhen used an inconspicuous hovercraft to travel deeper into the Hope. They turned off the main road into a small corridor. When they descended, there was a large door before them. Hanging on the door was the insignia of the research center and two large letters... HE.

Yes, this was the Homo Evolutis research center, known as HE center for short. In fact, ever since this research center was established, it was hidden from public view. Even though Yao Yuan didn't ban any mass media reporters from exploring the place, the reporters could only get information about the most surface things due to their lack of clearance credentials.

"...HE center experiment, Case Study C-127."

Before Yao Yuan and Guang Zhen was a monster-man with a very large brain... or rather a monster that looked like a human. Its brain was half the size of its body, which was to say that it was incredibly large. This meant that it could only lie in bed due to the heavy imbalance. However, the most surprising fact was that it was not a remains or specimen, it had eyes and a nose, and it was still alive.

"This is the only living case study we have left. It is now 6 months old and its brain kept on mutating since its cloning birth. We have taken out parts of its unimportant brain cells and discovered that it was only the lipids and cholesterol that were mutating and growing and not the actual brain matter. We cannot control or cure this mutation. In other words, it has caused the disintegration of its brain capacity. To put it simply, it is a retard, the type which has zero consciousness of itself and the world around it...

"Secondly, we are still unable to counteract the progeria in the

clones. The cells of the clone grow old at 1,400 times the normal human speed, this means that progeria has begun when they are still babies.

"This case study C has survived the longest, it has been alive for 6 months and its cellular age shows that it is only over 20 years old. That is already a big break through... but we still cannot solve the issue of the brain. If the speed of brain mutation is allowed to continue, at most we will have 1 more week before the body won't be able to support the weight of its brain and die. So case study C is officially a failure."

The manager of the HE center reported to the two leaders with shame and guilt coloring his face. Just like the earlier case studies A and B, this experiment also ended with a failure.

Yao Yuan nodded expressionlessly before saying, "This is a new field, so failure is inevitable. Learn from the mistake and prepare better for case study D, good luck."

After everyone had left, Guang Zhen asked Yao Yuan seriously, "Yao Yuan, this experiment C-127... the cells for the cloning come from you?"

Yao Yuan nodded. "Yes... Cloning of Homo Evolutis started from the day the HE center was established. When it comes to the cloning of normal human beings, where due to the limitation of genetics, other than genetic disease, the clones are no different from normal human beings. However, the cloning of Homo Evolutis has always led to failure no matter the methods used. Under these circumstances, it is only fair that I provide my own cells for the cloning experiments..."

Cloning was something that violated the rules of human nature and various religious doctrines; therefore, many countries had banned the technology back in the old Earth. Cloning was done in extreme secret on the Hope. In fact, the civilians had no idea that part of the resources had been channelled into this research.

However, this was a necessity because in the wide cosmos, humanity was as weak as a small bug inside a large forest. They could be wiped out at any moment due to numerous reasons. The human population was too low, only several ten thousand people, it was barely over the limitation for genetic variance. Should a great tragedy happen to the Hope, other than the sperm and ovum banks, reviving the greats from the genetic bank was also part of the human revivification plan. The most important part, naturally, was the HE center, who was responsible for the collection of Homo Evolutis genes!

In fact, from the information garnered by humanity, most level 3 and above space civilizations had experimented on Homo Evolutis or cosmic adapters, and cloning happened to be the most popular type, but... until now, there had been no successful examples.

Guang Zhen sighed. "If the cloning of Homo Evolutis is successful, of course it's good, but we shan't force it if it's impossible, because cloning Homo Evolutis is only a small part of that plan, our real focus is still that plan.

"The human fortification research plan."

Chapter 413: Next Generation

"From this point onwards, it is a dust-free clean room. You'll have to change into a special suit and go through the cleaning process before you can enter," Bo Li said expressionlessly.

Yao Yuan and Guang Zhen laughed awkwardly because only Bo Li dared to address them so nonchalantly. If this was anyone else on the Hope, they would explain the situation in a round-about way, probably putting on the special suit themselves to signal them, instead of ordering them around like Bo Li did.

There were about 20 people in the group, and all of them were high officials from the Barracks. After Bo Li's order, everyone followed Yao Yuan and Guang Zhen to go through the necessary process before they tailed Bo Li deeper into the experiment lab.

The lab was filled with researchers walking about, busy with their work, but Bo Li ignored them all as she brought the group deeper into the lab. They passed a large door before finally reaching their destination.

This was the seventh day after the Hope reached the solar system. The Black Star Troopers had been split into five rotations to explore every corner of the solar system and the Hope was heading towards their destination planet. With the Hope's current speed, they only needed 20 plus days to reach the planet, but these 20 days couldn't be wasted. As the Hope ventured deeper into this solar system, more and more citizens confirmed that this was going to be the New Solar System.

The biggest reason was because the selected planet had 3 moons of varying sizes.

For prehistoric civilizations that still couldn't explore space, having 3 moons was nothing spectacular, but for space civilizations, having a moon would greatly increase the planet's value. If it had more than 2 moons, the planet would normally be

transformed into a Shelter provided the planet wasn't too barren.

The reason was because the moon would provide a natural defensive barrier. A moon could rival the defensive power of a spaceship 10 times its size. One moon might not be able to cover the whole planet, but having more than 2 moons meant that the planet was indestructible.

All this information was available in the store of information provided by the alien merchants. The validity of this information was proven by the defensive committee from the Barracks. If one transformed the moon, it would be greatly effective in increasing the planet's natural defenses. Thus, a planet with 3 moons was truly a treasure, granted it was not better than a life-preserving planet, but could they give up such a good opportunity?

Therefore, this solar system had a great chance of being the New Solar System. The entirety of the Hope was focused deeply on the solar system and Yao Yuan was dealing with one of the important details. If they were going to settle there, then they had to defend it well. Humanity's population was low, so losing one person was a great loss to the civilization. Furthermore, the main defensive force currently was the Black Star Troopers, and they were Homo Evolutis. At this point, humanity knew the value of Homo Evolutis, but since they were also the greatest fighting force, they had to be employed. Therefore, the best solution was to supply them with better equipment so they wouldn't be defeated so easily.

"This is the new generation of Space Combat Jet... No, it is no longer a combat jet, this is the next generation of space transportation vehicle. I personally call it... the Steel Ball Prototype."

Before everyone's eyes was a silvery-white metallic ball. Its surface was glowing like a mirror, and it had no front or back, no top or bottom. It was about 15 meters tall and wide, looking not unlike a normal metallic ball.

Everyone present looked at one another with confusion. The thing did fit the name of Steel Ball because it was truly a ball made of steel... but how could it be a space vehicle? Or was Bo Li just pulling their legs?

At this point, everyone's gazes turned to Yao Yuan until the leader of humanity felt awkward under their scrutiny. Bo Lo then said expressionlessly like there was nothing out of the ordinary, "Now I will showcase the power of this Steel Ball Prototype. However, so far, the only suitable pilot is Yao Yuan; therefore, Chancellor, please take your seat. Send out 20 of your most trustworthy and powerful Homo Evolutis to pilot the Space Combat Jets, we'll have a match of space paintball and the group to be hit first loses."

"Huh?" Yao Yuan was confused. Why must he be the pilot? With his position, he would not enter the battlefield unless it was a threat huge enough to cause human extinction. Even then, someone would advise him from doing so.

Granted a paintball friendly match was not going to be dangerous, they were toying with a new technology that had not been tested before, and they were going to be doing this beside the Hope, which was flying at full speed. What if the Steel Ball exploded or accidentally harmed the Hope or the other Homo Evolutis?

Bo Li seemed to notice Yao Yuan's hesitation, because she turned to tell him, "This Steel Ball uses the latest control system. In fact, the shape and structure of the spaceship is such because it has to complement the control system. The control system is not my creation, its creator is someone else, but it is truly a genius design, so when I discovered it, I immediately added it to the Academy's S-grade confidential information. You have the clearance to check it, but obviously you haven't. In any case, you are the only person capable of piloting this control system... Don't worry, the steel ball itself is perfectly safe because this is just an experimental control

system. We have not added any new technology to it, it is currently only equipped with a level 2 space civilization's technology. In fact, it's technological level might be even lower than the Space Combat Jet's. Regardless, it is your choice whether you want to do this or not, but if you don't, then don't blame me for a lack of progress in the future because I won't have the data I need."

Yao Yuan was not really worried about the safety of the steel ball. After all, he doubted Bo Li would send him to his death considering their relationship, but he was just curious why it had to be him to pilot the thing...

After Bo Li activated the Steel Ball and opened the cockpit and Yao Yuan got into it, he realized how weird the interior of the cockpit was... It only had a chair and nothing else. This was beyond his expectations because the interior of the Space Combat Jet was filled with various devices.

"Yao Yuan, now do you understand? The interior structure of the Steel Ball is widely different from the Space Combat Jet, it is all related to the control system, and that is why I said you are the only person capable of piloting it. This is a space vehicle that is well beyond our years, so you'll have to personally experience its impossible strength. In fact, I dare say, if we can build a batch of usable Steel Balls, we will win even if we face a level 3 space civilization 100 times our size!"

(It's that good?)

Yao Yuan's interest was piqued. He knew Bo Li was not one to entertain exaggeration. Furthermore, Bo Li had seen a real level 3 space civilization's spaceship before, so she must be right, this Steel Ball must have some truly impressive system inside it.

"Now I will activate the control system. Yao Yuan..."

"Hmm?" Yao Yuan asked curiously, "What's wrong? You sound hesitant."

"Be careful and don't die out there."

"Huh?"

As he said that, the Steel Ball was bounced out of the Hope. The 20 Space Combat Jets who had been waiting immediately left the Hope to give chase. Soon, they caught up to the Steel Ball.

Yao Yuan, who was inside the cockpit, felt a sensation he had not experienced before. When the control system was activated, the electromagnetic resonance device inside the Steel Ball was activated as well. Yao Yuan felt like he had become one with the Steel Ball, as a wealth of information surged into his mind.

The sensation was too interesting; information like the Steel Ball's speed, flying angle, coordinates in space, the remaining energy, and its distance from enemies appeared in Yao Yuan's mind naturally. Even though he wasn't looking at them with his naked eye, it was clearer than that.

It was then that Yao Yuan understood why the Steel Ball had to be made in a spherical shape. Only that way he could feel the surroundings in 360 degrees! The control system connected directly to the consciousness, and this meant that he could move about without a specific rhythm in space. It was much more flexible than the Space Combat Jet!

How could a hand-piloted Space Combat Jet be more flexible than a vehicle that was piloted by consciousness? This was a difference between heaven and earth!

With a thought, the Steel Ball stopped moving and several small cannon barrels appeared on its surface. When the Space Combat Jets got near, 4 of them were shot immediately. As the group of Space Combat Jets wanted to retaliate, the Steel Ball seemed to evolve into a silver light rushing through space, and the Space Combat Jets couldn't even get a good aim...

In less than 10 seconds, the match between 1 Steel Ball Prototype

and 20 Space Combat Jets...

Ended with a landslide victory for the Steel Ball Prototype!

Chapter 414: New Solar System!

When Yao Yuan woke up, it was already 20 days later.

When he did, the first thing that he felt was a great headache and waves of mental lethargy came in consecutive episodes. It was very similar to how he felt when he overexerted his Homo Evolutis power before. He was drowsy and needed another two days of sleep before he could make a full recovery.

He remembered that during the paintball match, the Steel Ball he was piloting decimated the other 20 Space Combat Jets in just under 10 seconds. The power of the Steel Ball couldn't be underestimated and its maximum speed was at least 3 times faster than the latest Space Combat Jet. This was a very scary achievement.

However, when the Steel Ball returned to the Hope and the electromagnetic resonance stopped, Yao Yuan was assaulted by a head-splitting headache. Endless information crashed in his mind and his brain couldn't "digest" it. Before he knew it, he had collapsed onto the floor, and when he came to, it was already 20 days later.

"The creator of this control system is not me and it was merely a flawed project when I first discovered it. This control system involves the human brain, spirit, consciousness, and something even deeper. Furthermore, it can complement the Homo Evolutis power. It is something truly incredible, but unfortunately, it is not within the research scope of my Whisperer's power. Therefore, the improvements that I could add weren't complete and perfect. The fact that it could reach such a state is already beyond my expectations."

In the special sickroom, Bo Li was explaining the situation to Yao Yuan as she peeled an apple for him.

Yao Yuan had stayed in bed for another 2 days, and even though

he was still incredibly tired, he was at least mentally present. When he heard what Bo Li had to say, he asked immediately, "You mean... there is another Whisperer on the Hope?"

Bo Li glanced at him. "That I cannot be certain, perhaps the person is a human genius like Da Bing, but... the chance of a hidden Whisperer is high."

Yao Yuan was already grinning from ear to ear. After all, this was a Whisperer, whose contribution to a civilization was bigger than a Thinker's, and it could rival his importance of an Immortal. The only drawback was that each Whisperer had their own research specialization. They were geniuses like Einstein in their specialized research area, but they were not more brilliant than a normal scientist outside of it.

Currently, the Hope had three famed Whisperers. They had Ivan for biology, who was responsible for the cultivation of plants and animal rearing on the Hope as well as the strengthening of the human body, like elongation of lifespan and things of that sort. Of course, Ivan was still researching the alien plant and hopefully one day it could be used as humanity's trump card, an ultimate weapon on the level of the Gravity Cannon.

The second was pathologist Saburo, whose specialization was in the field of viruses. He was the mastermind behind the study of immune systems. In fact, Saburo could be considered the saviour of humanity because the immune system upgrade he came up with allowed human beings to survive in space and land on alien planets without worry. The alien virus was like an open book for Saburo, and currently he was researching on the zerg race's cells, hoping to employ it as an ultimate weapon in the future as well.

Third was naturally Bo Li. She was incredibly knowledgeable in the fields of mechanical engineering, modern science, and related fields. Therefore, she was responsible for all the weapon upgrades on the Hope. Over the years, she had solidified her position as the brain of the Barracks. The Gravity Cannon that had saved

humanity at the Shelter was her creation.

These three Whisperers had introduced a startling change to human technology. It was thus a surprise to Yao Yuan that there was a fourth Whisperer hiding on the Hope. This Whisperer was quite possibly the type humanity needed the most and probably the rarest type of Whisperer in space... the Whisperer that specialized in the field of cosmic adapters!

"We have to find this person..." Yao Yuan said excitedly before he paused suddenly and turned to ask Bo Li, "How did this control system reach your hands? Who gave it to you?"

Bo Li shook her head and explained, "Someone left an USB drive on my table, and since it didn't go through the internet server, there was no record in the AI either. The USB drive is something common, a small gadget, but it can contain up to 100 TB of content. A normal family on the Hope would have three or four of these, so it is impossible to trace it back to a specific buyer. Furthermore, this person was very clever. When he or she came in to drop the USB drive, he or she avoided the surveillance cameras masterfully..."

"In other words, the person is from the Barracks." Yao Yuan nodded. "The fact that he or she knows how to avoid detection means that the person probably has a background in Special Forces and he or she should have a certain standing in the Defense Unit... The scope is already so much smaller. If we add the timing of the latest Homo Evolutis Awakening, then it is 70 percent confirmed that this person comes from the Noah One..."

Bo Li continued expressionlessly, "You're going to seek this Whisperer out? With the help of the two Thinkers, you can probably trace the clues back to the person easily. The Hope is only so big, so that shouldn't be so hard."

Yao Yuan shook his head. "I don't think we should. This person is also a human, and it is out of kindness that he or she delivered this

control system. It is probably because he or she knows we're settling in this solar system and will need to expand the military in the future. The members from the Noah One are still hesitant around the Hope's government, and that is probably why this person refuses to reveal their identity. As long as this person means the Hope no harm, then I believe we should abide by their wishes. If they wish for their identity to remain a secret, then so be it. After all, the Hope's government has nothing to hide, so eventually they will reveal themselves voluntarily."

He was looking for a Whisperer who would work for humanity willingly. If he forced the person into the open, he might cause a grievous offense depending on the person's personality. If this caused the person to refuse to do any research, then it would be a great waste, so the better option was to wait patiently. Yao Yuan had confidence the Hope's transparent and fair governing system would eventually pull this person out into the open.

After that, Yao Yuan agreed with Bo Li that the control system was indeed incredibly strong. Combined with the Steel Ball prototype, it was truly a cross-generation space vehicle. If it could somehow take down the shield of a level 4 space civilization's spaceship, Yao Yuan had faith humanity could beat a level 4 space civilization!

Therefore, he hoped Bo Li would continue to work on improving the control system. Even though this was not her specialized field, Bo Li was herself a scientist. Gradual improvement was still doable, given there was enough time. Thankfully, this Steel Ball was just a prototype. The weapon placement, the movement system, and the electromagnetic resonance system had to be tweaked, and there was the time needed for Bo Li to improve the whole thing. When the Steel Ball was fully online, then it would truly usher in a new change for humanity.

While Yao Yuan was asleep, the Hope had reached the target planet. After another round of surveillance, this planet was even

better than they thought, and at this point, it was already 90 percent certain that this was going to be humanity's New Solar System.

This was because they had detected a layer of ice layer underneath the planet's surface. Other than dry ice, there was lots of frozen water. The biggest find was that the planet was not a life-preserving planet, there was no trace of life on the planet. In other words, after humanity settled on this planet, they wouldn't need to be afraid of threat from a neutron star fragment. Therefore, they could focus fully on terraforming this planet. With the amount of cosmic adapters available to humanity, it was not out of question that this would end up being a second Earth several thousand years from now!

With three moons and many asteroid clusters acting as natural defenses, this solar system was truly the best find. The Black Star Troopers had gone through the asteroid clusters that were full of valuable resources. The solar system also had 3 gas giants that could provide resources that humanity couldn't use for now, but when humanity became level 3 space civilization, these 3 gas giants would be crucial. The hydrogen atoms in them could provide energy for the reactors for millions of years to come.

Because of this, after Yao Yuan woke up, the entirety of the Hope was waiting for him to make an announcement. Yao Yuan hosted a poll at the House of Representatives, and after the voting, the human government finally came to a decision. The first step of the white manifesto, finding a new home base for humanity, was officially completed.

"I announce...

"This solar system now belongs to humanity and it is the lawful territory of human civilization. This is humanity's...

"New Solar System!"

Chapter 415: Red Moon, Dark Moon, Light Moon

"The three moons, according to their orbit and distance from the planet as well as their own geological quality, have different appearances if seen from the planet itself. One of them is bloody red, another one is inky black, and the last one is shining bright.

"According to the ship-wide vote last week, they are respectively named Red Moon, Dark Moon, and Light Moon. And now we're landing on the moon closest to the planet, the Light Moon."

The Hope had been idling above the Light Moon for more than a week now. It was not that the Hope wanted to stop there, but for the sake of absolute safety, they had to carry out plenty of calculations, exploration, and detection before they could allow the Hope to land on it.

The Hope now was no longer the same ship that left Earth. It had reached the peak of level 2 space civilization and was brushing up against level 3 space civilization. It also had supplies that would last the ship for at least 10 years as well as the elite group of Black Star Troopers. Humanity was no longer a rookie in space.

In this one week, the thorough exploration of the Light Moon had been completed. Information like the components of its core, its geographical layer's structure, internal environment, and the types of minerals harvestable had been known. It was then that the Hope finally landed on the Light Moon. Even the landing spot had its own criteria. First, the place had to be a piece of smooth plateau near deposits of minerals that would be instrumental to forming the New Solar System.

It was worth noting that these minerals were more abundant on the asteroid clusters and mining would be easier there. Some asteroids were formed completely of the metal and they could be used after being smelted down. However, traversing to and from

the clusters was not easy. Even with the Hope's maximum speed, it would require at least 8 days to complete the journey. If added the consideration of processing time and arrangement of various materials, a single trip would have to be as long as half a month. Thus, it would be easier if they mined the stuff on the planet or the moon itself.

"This is the Light Moon, the moon closest to our target planet, and it is also the final defense line of our home planet in the future. We will transform this place. Of course, the first thing to do is build a metal processing plant worthy of a level 2 space civilization. Then, with the plant as the center, we will expand into modernized processing factories. This moon will be humanity's city of minerals and productivity in the future. Things like farming tools, machines, space jets, mining equipment, weapon, space armors, and even spaceships and battleships will be assembled here in the future!

"This way, the issue of a clean environment on our future home planet will be resolved. Of course, we will also build a large residential area here for the factory workers. If possible, we will transform residential areas beyond a certain size into a holiday retreat. Of course, those are concerns for the future. The most important thing now is to construct the foundation of an industrial system!"

When Yao Yuan finished his speech and left the stage, the room erupted in camera flashes. At the same time, his speech was broadcasted throughout the Hope via the ship's internet server. Be it the 3D images on the streets or the private 3D televisions at home, his message was relayed, and at the same time, many people cheered.

While Yao Yuan was in the middle of giving his speech, a Black Star Trooper unit accompanying a Defense Unit ten times its size as well as four Space Combat Jets and plenty of transport shuttles carrying thousands of workers left the Hope. They had with them

the rudimentary blueprints and the base model that was constructed on the Hope. They would be responsible for starting the home base on the Light Moon.

Travelling along with the group was Yun Si, who had to be there as the vice-captain of a Black Star Trooper unit and Yue Xuan, who was tagging along as an apprentice engineer. They had been in a romantic relationship for more than a year and, technically speaking, they should be happy about this "coincidence" that both of them were sent on the same mission. However, only Yue Xuan felt that way. Yun Si had a heavy feeling pressing down on his heart.

(Could it be that Bo Li or even Yao Yuan suspect that the control system was Yue Xuan's design and it was me who helped her deliver it to Bo Li? Impossible, I've checked the area closely and even went through the Hope's internal design. I'm sure that I've evaded all the surveillance cameras, and even if there was a hidden camera, it couldn't have known it was me. Furthermore, even if it did, they wouldn't have been able to link it to Yue Xuan... But why would they send both of us on this mission then? Is it just a coincidence?)

Yun Si was greatly bothered, but he didn't let it show on the surface. Yue Xuan was too innocent to worry herself about these things. On their journey to the moon, she found an excuse to worm her way into the midst of the Black Star Troopers. The unit knew that she was their vice-captain's girlfriend, so they cleverly cleared a private space for the little couple.

The first thing out of Yue Xuan's mouth was, "Yun Si, you have been extremely busy when I came to find you for these few days. Before that, you were busy exploring the New Jupiter. How is it? Is the planet pretty upon closer inspection? By the way, have you seen the flight experiment of the Steel Ball prototype that happened a few days ago?..."

Before she could finish, Yun Si was spooked and he immediately

closed the voice recording system in the Space Armor. Then he signaled for Yue Xuan to do the same. Then the two of them communicated via a private channel. "Haven't I told you not to bring those things up when we're not alone?"

Yue Xuan immediately looked around, patted her chest, and sighed. "You scared me. Thankfully, there are only the two of us around here... Where was I... yes, that psychological control system was certainly impressive, it is truly a design that made me faint. Isn't your wifey impressive?"

Yun Si felt a headache coming, but he still said, "Yes, yes, you are the most impressive, but you better not talk so much about this in the future."

Yue Xuan grumbled with dissatisfaction, "Why? This is a cross-generation design! Alas, the design is still not complete. When I saw the video of the trial several days ago, I had a new idea regarding the design. If only I was given a chance to improve upon it. This is a control system meant for Homo Evolutis, and I believe it is entirely possible to simplify it to be used by normal human beings. However, the technology required for all that is too great, it needs a large amount of modern devices to be used in calculation and experiments. If only I could join Professor Bo Li's lab. I hear it has the latest scientific-use technology and it even has products from level 3 space civilizations. Thinking about it is quite exciting... but this Chancellor sure is biased. We're both Whisperers, but he is only good to his wifey..."

Yun Si's headache turned worse. In fact, after they got to know each other better, he realized that Yue Xuan was a quintessential chatterbox; her lips would rarely close after she started talking. However, thanks to her innocent nature, her chatter would rarely be construed as annoying, but as her boyfriend, he would still occasionally find himself as her nagging victim.

"You two are different," Yun Si explained, "After all, she is a well-known Whisperer. About 70 percent of high tech weapons on the

Hope came from her, and you're still relatively unknown..."

Yue Xuan grumbled instantly, "That is all your fault for telling me to keep a low profile. Honestly, my designs are not worse than Professor Bo Li's. Even though... most of them are weapons for Homo Evolutis, that is already good enough. For example, when I saw the Steel Ball trial several days ago, I was struck with inspiration. The updated control system and psychokinetic floating cannon are all wonderful design. Of course, there are still improvements to be done, but those are there because I don't have the necessary technology to design them. If I had the same resources as Professor Bo Li, hehe..."

Yun Si scratched his head, and after some time he added, "So be it. It might not be so bad if we're discovered.... You might get the fame you need, but now is still not that time. In fact, we might need your help to get the members from the Noah One closer into the inner circle..."

(But I have to admit that Yao Yuan's government is transparent and fair. This human government has no dirty skeletons in its closet, so being discovered wouldn't be a bad thing. After all, it was due to kindness that I volunteered that control system... Sigh, maybe I should find a suitable opportunity to explain everything...)

As Yun Si chatted with Yue Xuan, the group finally landed inside a large crater on the Light Moon. They started assembling the devices and the AI robots that tagged along started operating. They took over the jobs that needed brute strength. In fact, with the increase in technology, the productivity also increased exponentially. In just one afternoon, about 5 hours to be precise, the first base was already half-finished. All the quarantine rooms had been built and these isolated rooms would be resting the depots. This meant that they didn't need to return to the Hope every time they needed to rest.

With a speed that was observable to the naked eye, a silver base started to appear beside the cluster of rocks not far away from the

Hope.

The first supermagnetic smelter was built on the fourth day of landing. Tons of minerals were pushed into it and the manufacturing process officially started.

The number of workers outside of the Hope had reached more than ten thousand, and the number was still slowly climbing...

Chapter 416: A Bountiful Year

Zhang San returned home with great excitement. As he burst through the door, the smell of beef stew filtered into his nostrils, causing him to salivate almost instantly.

"You're home? Go wash your hands, it's almost time for dinner. I've prepared ox tail soup for you. I went to the market early in the morning to fetch freshest ingredients, I'm sure you'll love it," a middle-aged woman's voice drifted from the kitchen.

Zhang San rushed into the kitchen immediately and saw the woman ladling the soup into a bowl. He went to grab the bowl and said, "Mom, I'll do it, you go sit there and rest, I have a good news to tell you."

The middle-aged woman smiled and moved to oblige. She cleared up the mess in the kitchen and was about to leave when the door was pushed open and in walked a middle-aged man. The man's face was carved with tiredness and he grumbled as he walked in, "I'm home. What are you cooking? It smells so good in here."

The middle-aged woman who was walking out of the kitchen smiled and answered, "Ox tail soup. Just look at you two, always hungry no matter what. Go wash up, dinner will be served soon."

This was a normal family of three. After the three of them were seated at the dining table, the middle-aged woman served her husband and son each a bowl of soup before getting one for herself. All three of them took a sip at the same time and sighed with great satisfaction. The flavorful ox tail combined with the freshness of tomatoes created a soup dish that was not worse than the soup served at the best restaurant on the Hope.

The middle-aged man suddenly said solemnly, "The taste is indeed not bad. Honey, your cooking skill has improved again... but this appears to be ox tail from free-range cattle, so it must've been expensive, right?"

The middle-aged woman defused her husband's question with a bright smile. "That's where you're wrong. Recently, the price for food items has been dropping. This ox tail was about the same price as reared pork and the tomatoes were cheaper by half compared to before, so they were not expensive."

The middle-aged man nodded and didn't reply. He sipped the soup and grabbed a few of the other dishes when Zhang San announced suddenly, "Dad, the school has assigned me my job posting."

Both of his parents were shocked, but happiness gradually appeared on their faces. His father asked immediately, "So soon? You've been asked to stay behind at school for only a year, how can they give you a job posting so soon? What about your seniors?"

Zhang San answered with his mouth full, "Most of them got their job postings too. Some seniors have already started work, but I heard that many other students who were asked to stay back have received their job postings today too..."

Before the middle-aged man could ask for more details, the middle-aged woman chimed in excitedly and worriedly, "What kind of job it is? Don't tell me it's general maintenance, like the cleaning crew. I hear from others that those job postings have the least benefits and pay..."

"No, no," Zhang San corrected immediately, "it's an apprenticeship at the engineering unit. The monthly H-coin is slightly better than dad's, but by how much. I still have no clue. I'll know the details when I go for the interview tomorrow. However, I hear that the benefits offered are very nice. After one year of apprenticeship, there will be government housing and other benefits."

Smiles broke out on both the middle-aged man's and woman's faces, but the middle-aged woman still asked with suspicion, "I remember that the daughter of our neighbor has stayed behind at

school for two years already, but she still hasn't received any job posting last I heard. So are you sure this isn't some group scam?"

Her husband berated her with a laugh, "This is not Earth, where would you find a scammer group? If there is really one, you think the Chancellor and his team are all blind? I know a thing or two about this sudden development. They're trying to build a moon base on the Light Moon, so they are in serious need of workers, especially those in the fields of engineering, mechanics, super electromagnetism, and energy. Thankfully, I was bright enough to tell our son to enroll in the study of super electromagnetism. Granted, he's still only an apprentice and it is not a given that he'll become an actual engineer, but if he does, you know the benefits provided to the engineers, right?"

His wife laughed and said a few words of praise before turning to her son. "San Er, you've worked so hard to get this job posting, so you have to focus hard at work, okay? We are so proud of you. This is wonderful news, come have some more soup."

Zhang San suddenly felt his eyes red with tears. He was reminded of the years he spent at school and that extra year he was forced to stay back. His family wasn't that wealthy; his father was a simple electrician and his mother was sick. Even though the Hope provided healthcare for all its citizens, it was only for serious treatments; everyday supplements still needed money. However, he knew that his mother never once spent money on those. At the time, he was still a student, and his student stipend was barely enough to buy her any nutritious food. Thinking about it made his heart twitch with sadness, but now that he had a job, one with good benefits, he swore to throw himself into work so that his parents could finally enjoy a comfortable life...

This scene was happening all over the Hope. This was because the Hope's government had been forced to ration all provided resources fairly and not based on needs. They were travelling in space, so their supplies were limited. The fact that they could find

a system to abide by for everyone was already fair enough, and allocating supplies according to needs was simply impossible. This was especially true when the Hope was travelling long distances, when there might even be limited supplies. Under such conditions, most citizens on the Hope couldn't be considered rich, they were barely surviving.

Furthermore, the Hope was only so big and there were only so many available job opportunities. No matter how hard the Hall of Communications tried to specialize and delineate the job scope, it was impossible to give jobs to several ten thousand people. Lastly, matching job scopes was also an issue. They couldn't have a great physicist go clean up the streets, right? This was not only a waste, but also an insult on the faculty of knowledge!

Because of this, most graduate students from high-tech courses had to stay at school for years after their graduation and relied on government stipend. Even though they understood the government's difficulties, saying that they didn't feel any resentment was untrue. It was simply that the resentment still hadn't reached a scale where it would explode.

Lastly, there was another reason... the population number increase. To be frank, the Hope had reached its maximum number of upgrades. After all, this ship was only meant to fit ten thousand people in space. Through multiple upgrades, the capacity had improved, but it was still not enough to fit the human population that had almost reach 400,000 people. The Hope was too small. They had been gone from Earth for almost 21 years, and as the ship that held humanity's life, future, hope... it was really too old and too small.

In fact, there was no longer any empty space left on the Hope, but even so, there were still many families who hadn't been given their own housing. Having three generations in one house was a common occurrence. Many newlyweds were forced to stay with their parents. Just think about it, the first batch of space babies

was now 21 years old, some of them even already had their own children. Therefore, the Hope had become the biggest problem that limited humanity's growth.

The human government's officials of course knew about the importance of population numbers in space. As long as the population number didn't reach a hundred million, then humanity was at risk of extinction. Therefore, planned parenthood was technically a taboo on the Hope. In fact, it was a sin by law to promote planned parenthood. In fact, if any government worker or representative mentioned planned parenthood at any public place, then they would need to find a new job as long as they survived the law.

Therefore... it was not that humanity had the luxury of choice. They had to stay at this solar system because they desperately needed to expand.

That was the current situation the Hope was facing. It had 400,000 people. Minus the newborns and children, the rest were all adults. In other words, there were about 300,000 adults, and that meant that there needed to be at least 150,000 job vacancies. The Hope could provide about 50,000 job postings, the Barracks could cover yet another 30,000 job postings. This meant that around 70,000 jobs vacancies were still needed, and the base on the Light Moon was perfect to fill that need. There were many open job vacancies in the fields of harvesting, smelting, manufacturing, and human resource management. As the moon base started to get constructed, a new breath of life was inserted into the Hope.

The first to notice this was not Yao Yuan and the government but the representatives. Their constituents decided their direction, and in the latest House of Representatives hearing, there was a new vote that requested the human government to expand the moon base before the 21 New Year. Other than manufacturing and smelting bases, they requested a residential area to be built on the Light Moon. They wanted the base to fit at least 500,000 people.

The supplies and manpower exhausted for this plan would be enough to build several Hopes, but at the same time, this project was going to provide many job vacancies.

When Yao Yuan was reading this proposal, Guang Zhen came with a new proposal for the expansion of humanity's military system. His heart was even darker and bigger than the representatives...

"What? The first human fleet contains 50 battleships the size of the Hope, 450 guardian ships that are one-fourth the size of the Hope, as well as 1,200 combat spaceships armed with space cannons..."

"Why don't you just kill me now and become the Chancellor? That way, they'll get built even faster!"

Yao Yuan roared in the captain's room, and it was transferred through a message channel through the Hope and into everyone's ears. Everyone smiled helplessly and kindly...

Hope, future, they were up for grasp!

Chapter 417: Supply

"The shuttle in front has to move faster! This batch of building supplies has to reach the 11th building of Area B or none of us are getting off work today!"

Zhang San frowned while listening to the voice drifting through his spacesuit. It was a man's voice filled with desperation and urgency. In reality, everyone was rushing, but the speed of the hovercraft was only so fast. Even though the lane was already divided into top, middle, and bottom, for the workers on the Light Moon, the traffic was still incredibly crowded.

It had been 3 months since the Hope landed on the Light Moon. In these 3 months, with a speed that surprised even humanity itself, a large, super-modern industrial base was constructed on the moon. It combined the function of a smelting, manufacturing, and production factory. It had taken over those responsibilities from the Hope. This base on the Light Moon could process up to 5,000,000 tons of materials, 200 hovercrafts, 600,000 tons of building materials, and 120 Space Combat Jets daily. On top of that, it could churn out 100 battleship ships every five days, a guardian ship every 20 days, and a mothership every 60 days.

At the same time, a residential area had started being built next to the industrial base. The place would be able to support 500,000 people with schools, parks, and recreations. It would be called the City of the Light Moon, but the project was huge. The projected time of completion for the main parts of the city was 3 years, and 5 years for full completion. Of course, the amount of supplies needed for it would be gigantic as well.

"So far, the the Light Moon industrial base has built 8,000 plus hovercrafts, 1,000 plus transport shuttles, 1,700 plus tons of building materials, 10 battleships, 2 guardian spaceships, and they'll need another 20 days to finish building a mothership of the same level as the Hope. After that will be the expansion project of

the residential area..."

In the captain's room, Barbie explained to Yao Yuan the plans in place for humanity for the next three months. Yao Yuan smiled and said, "Thank you, Barbie, for your hard work... by the way, your request for in-vitro pregnancy has been rejected. You have to understand that single mothers are unable to get that according to the law, as it is not good for the child's growth. But why would you want that procedure? I hear you have many pursuers. One of them is a representative from the House of Representatives. I've looked through his files, he's handsome, rich, and kind. Apparently, he has been pursuing you for eight years already. You still don't planned to get married?"

Barbie in her professional suit, a nude silk stocking, and a pair of black high heels was a real beauty. Her face was still the picture of youth, she had kept a constant check on her weight, and with her identity as the personal secretary to the Hope's captain, she was undeniably a diamond-class beauty. The man who pursued her could really fill up three streets, but for some reason, even though they had left Earth for 20 years, she had remained single. It wasn't until she submitted a request for in-vitro pregnancy recently that Yao Yuan realized that she wanted a child. However, that request was promptly rejected.

Barbie pouted but didn't explain herself. She cleared the document and stood to the side, waiting for the next order from Yao Yuan. Her heart itched with annoyance.

Actually, Barbie herself couldn't explain what she was feeling. The longer she stayed beside Yao Yuan, the stronger the sense of reliance she had on him. Fine, perhaps it was not as unexplainable as she thought. However, since there was such a wonderful man beside her, Barbie felt like her standard had gotten much higher as well. She saw herself as a modern woman, one who could survive just fine without the company of a man. Since she couldn't find anyone that could win her over, then she would just live her life on

her own. It was a recently that she felt like she wanted a child. The fact that it was rejected by her boss, which in a way was the cause for the state she was in, made her burn with annoyance.

Yao Yuan didn't continue this topic but stood up to stand beside the window. Looking at the silvery base and the rows of hovercrafts that crowded the streets, the sense of busy activity gave him joy.

Humanity had survived for about 2 decades in space. They had been through a lot and had sacrificed a lot. The emotions, sadness, joy, and relief that accompanied them throughout these years were something that couldn't be put into words. However, finally, they had found solace. Humankind had finally found a place where they could flap their wings and fly. Its great potential as a level 2 space civilization could finally be unleashed.

"Such greatness, this is the vibrancy of human life! We might seem weak now, but give us some time and in another 20 years, humanity will finally walk the cosmos with ease and ignore all the civilizations under level 3!"

Yao Yuan's tone was level, but Barbie could see his whole body shaking when he said that. She heard the pride, honor, and melancholy mixed within the words. Indeed, humanity had sacrificed a lot before it could reach this step. Humanity had given up too much for the sake of survival... but this view before him, it confirmed for him that all the sacrifices... had been worth it!

If everyone who had laid their lives down for humanity had something akin to a soul, they would say proudly that their sacrifices had been worth it... because it was necessary for the continuation of humanity!

Yao Yuan stood beside the window for a long time before he retracted his gaze. Barbie saw the glint in his eyes, but when she checked next, it was already gone. After a long time, Yao Yuan asked, "It seems like there is another pregnancy fever within these

three months."

Barbie quickly pulled out a document and said, "Yes, from the report given by the statistics department, the pregnancy fever this time is even more pronounced than the one on the new planet. Until today, the number of pregnant mothers who came to the hospital to register is around 43,000. It is almost twice the number of pregnancies this time last year. The health department has sent over the updated benefits list for the expectant mothers. Due to the great amount of new mothers, the people from health department hope that they can have more members in the baby and toddlers education sector and wish that the government can improve the benefits offered to expectant mothers..."

Yao Yuan nodded and mumbled, "It is time to improve the benefits for pregnant mothers. It is another story if we're in space and trying to survive, but now that we're in the New Solar System, we have enough to do more... Leave the document behind, I'll read it over and think about it. Also, print another few more copies and send them to the related departments. I want them to write a report and proposal about this, make sure this is more than just a publicity move, we have to really take care of these pregnant mothers. About the supplies... Have they finished the construction for Area A on the City of the Light Moon?"

Barbie flipped through the stack of documents and pulled out another. "Yes, the construction of Area A will be finished in another 6 days. After all, the place will be delineated into blocks to fit 100,000 people..."

Yao Yuan waved his hands and said, "Why do we need so many residential areas? The Hope is still hospitable, right? Furthermore, moving will exhaust plenty of resources. How about this, clear out 10,000 houses for the workers working on the base and the remaining resources can be used in further expansion... But we will have to change the direction, starting with public goods. I hear that the prices of pork, mutton, and beef have started to rise and

that the prices of related luxury items and necessities have followed suit. The price hike is especially obvious for rice, sugar, and salt, right?"

Barbie searched through the stack once more and continued as she pulled another document out, "This is something I wanted to report. Due to the wildfire expansion we're having, the Hope's resources started to deplete at a rapid rate. According to the report handed over by the public consumption department, if this is allowed to continue, we will reach the yellow emergency line in the next month, and within 6 months, the Hope will experience an unmitigated famine...

"Related is this report from the Hope's central bank. The current purchasing power of H-coins is too high, so much so that we do not have enough resources to support it anymore. If this is allowed to continue, we might reach a stage where the citizens have too much money but nothing to buy. When that happens, the public's trust in the human government will be greatly affected. Regarding that, the central bank proposed that we adjust the value of H-coins. In the next 3 to 6 months, we can lower the value of H-coins to combat the rising purchasing power."

Yao Yuan started thinking. Barbie was right, these two reports were related. Due to the expansion, there was an explosion of job vacancies, and the salaries of certain jobs had become proportional to the jobs' scope. For example, a street clearer had a salary that was only slightly higher than government stipend, but driving the transport shuttle to and from the City of the Light Moon paid much greater than that. Therefore, there was an influx of H-coins in the market. To combat that situation, Yao Yuan had to increase the market supply of resources. Thankfully, it was still in a manageable situation. However, as the price of the items continued to increase, it was already devaluing the H-coins.

"We cannot devalue the H-coins!" Yao Yuan confirmed. "Go inform the people from the supply center to come up with a price

survey and set the highest price for each market item. The price cannot go higher than that and continue to supply the market. H-coins are greatly related to the strength of the human economy and government, so at least at this crucial moment, we cannot allow it to weaken... Like I said before, use the space saved at Area A and cultivate all of them into bio-plantations and farms. I want to see a new batch of market produce in 3 months!"

Chapter 418: New Year

"In three more days, it'll be the New Year of the 13th year."

Zhang San's heart was burning. It had been four months since the school assigned him to be an apprentice for an engineering unit on the City of Light Moon. Due to his performance in these four months, he was hand-picked to join the unit as a registered electromagnetic engineer.

This meant that Zhang San was officially on the Hope's payroll. He could enjoy the benefits offered by the government, which included health benefits, social benefits, and retirement funds. He was also protected by the employee's union, meaning he wouldn't be fired simply because his boss didn't like his face.

Not only that, his base salary had doubled; it was about twice as much as his father's salary. For these past four months, Zhang San had bought many new things for his family. Even though they weren't anything expensive, realizing that his parents had a more comfortable life because of them made Zhang San's heart sing with joy.

Soon, New Year would arrive. Even though Zhang San was a space baby, he was born into a traditional Chinese family. He had celebrated Lunar New Year ever since he was a child. The greatest memory he had of the holiday was probably the angpao [Red Envelope] he would receive from his parents and parents of his friends as well as neighbors. Even though his parents would end up taking 90 percent of his angpao money, the leftovers would be enough for him to buy many snacks. That was truly his happiest childhood memory.

However, Zhang San sighed internally while thinking about this. He came from a, frankly, poor family. It was tradition for his parents to give the same amount of money back to the children of the parents Zhang San had received angpao from, but it was

actually a great pressure on his family's financial situation. Of course, as a child, he didn't understand that. In fact, he remembered himself crying and making an absolute fuss when his parents took his angpao away when he was a child. When he was older, he understood their difficulties. The little leftovers he was given to buy snacks was practically shaved off of his parent's flesh. Now that he thought about it, his heart twisted with both appreciation and melancholy.

However, this year it would be different.

Zhang San gripped his fists tightly. This year, he had started working and had disposable income. He could buy his parents some new clothes and even purchase the 3D family projector television his parents had been testing at the mall as well as a table of scrumptious New Year's eve dinner, [Reunion Dinner]...

The future was looking up and he was sure it would only get better if he worked harder...

At the same time, Zhang San's mother was window-shopping at one of the Hope's many merchant streets. As she continued walking down the street, she made mental calculations of the various prices and the overall budget she had for the Lunar New Year. All mothers were like magicians, they had the wonderful power of stretching out the budget to make the most out of the littlest they had. When Zhang San's mother reached the end of the street, she already had a rough idea in mind on what to cook for reunion dinner.

(That's enough to fill up a table. That husband of mine has been mentioning that he wants to try the lobsters from the new planet, right? Normally, we wouldn't be able to afford it, but it's New Year, and Zhang San deserves some reward for the hard work he has been doing...)

Just as Zhang San's mother was figuring out the rest of the menu, a woman walked from the other side. The woman looked to be in

her 20s, though she was already in her 40s, the same age group as Zhang San's mother. Thanks to genetic mesomeric devices, every middle-aged person on the Hope had the appearance of a twenty-something.

Zhang San's mother obviously knew this woman, because they smiled in greeting, and Zhang San's mother said, "Hello, In-Law, you're also here to buy ingredients for reunion dinner? How about we go together, I'm so confused by all these produce from the new planet that I've never seen. I'm sure, in-law, who is more knowledgeable, will be able to help me make the right purchase."

The woman smiled in return. "There's still at least two more years before we're actual in-laws... By the way, do you mind giving me the recipe for the sweet and sour pork In-Law made last time? That daughter of mine has been craving it so much since you made it last time..."

The two women started chatting amiably and continued shopping...

During the extra year Zhang San was forced to stay behind at school, he met a 16-year-old junior who had just started attending school. That was how their relationship began. Eventually, they became a couple. However, the girl came from a rather well-off family. Her father was a senior engineer, and because of this, it placed quite a pressure on the young couple. After all, the girl's parents wouldn't have allowed their daughter to follow someone with no job. In fact, they were on the verge of breaking up if nothing changed.

Thankfully, something did change. Zhang San not only got his job assignment, he was assigned to the engineer unit his girlfriend's father managed. Even though this was a great pressure on the young man, he lived up to his potential. His hardworking nature and the fact that he was on official payroll greatly improved his girlfriend's father's opinion of him. In fact, both families had already discussed the possibility of an engagement. The couple

would marry when the girl was 18 and they would start their own family.

Everything was going swell for humanity. Happiness and joy blossomed on everyone's faces. They had been at the New Solar System for only four months, but things had already changed and improved so much. If this continued for one year, 10 years, 20 years... perhaps this place would really end up a second home for humanity.

"Two more days and it's new year. We have to be on time for all the vegetable basket projects. As I've said before, food is the first necessity of the people. If the people are unable to fill their stomachs, then this government might as well dissolve itself... Previously, we had the excuse of not having enough materials and space, but now? I've given you all an open usage of the materials, so take all the fertilizers and human resources you need. I've even opened the empty plots on the City of Light Moon for you, so I don't want to hear any more excuses from the agriculture department. The Hope's government is a government of its word. If the all-important vegetable basket project cannot be finished, I expect resignation letters from everyone responsible."

Yao Yuan stressed the importance of the vegetable basket project again before moving on to discuss the new year activities with the other leaders...

"F*ck, I feel like I'm getting a migraine..."

Yao Yuan took a sip of tea and complained to Barbie, who was standing beside him. Barbie's face twitched and she almost burst out laughing, but she stifled it and said, "The New Year party's director wished to borrow a guardian spaceship and its related personnel and some Black Star Troopers to shoot a close-up video of Homeward Planet. He says it is for humanity to witness the glory of the planet before it is officially transformed."

Yao Yuan thought about it for a long time before saying, "One

guardian spaceship, you say? Guang Zhen sees them as more important than his life. These few days, he has been training the fleet, saying even though New Year is coming soon, the training cannot be lax. The surveillance and patrol cannot stop. The director wants to borrow a guardian spaceship? This is going to be hard..."

Barbie pouted and said, "Then, shall I reject the director?"

"No." Yao Yuan added, "Promoting the Homeward Planet step by step is part of our plan after all. Furthermore, shooting this video is going to help increase the sense of loyalty, anticipation, and honor on the Hope. I don't think I can get him a guardian spaceship, but a battleship should be fine. After all, this is only for filming, not battle. Homeward Planet doesn't have any lifeform to put up a fight, so I'll allow one battleship, two Black Star Troopers, and 10 Defense Unit soldiers. However, I have a condition: the video has to be longer than 10 minutes and I want it to contain frames of our human fleet. Even though the fleet is still not yet complete, have the director find the correct angles or use some editing. I want the human fleet to look impressive and mighty..."

"Starting next year, other than building plans, the Defense Unit will also start to expand. Currently, we're in need of fresh blood, but the building process of the New Solar System's first fleet cannot be stopped, so why not make use of this video for some military recruitment..."

When Yao Yuan finished, Barbie jotted down everything he said. Then Barbie asked, "Is there anything else to consider? The confidentiality clause of the New Solar System's first fleet?"

"There's no need," Yao Yuan replied. "The New Solar System will have three guardian spaceship fleets. These are existences that can be known to the public. Just like the US' Pacific fleet when we were back on Earth, the whole world knew of their existence. We have to let the public understand that we are not only responsible for humanity's continuity but also responsible for leading

everyone towards happiness and protecting them from external danger. The existence of these three fleets mustn't be made a secret. In fact, we have to promote it as much as we can, the number, the scale, the technological level, and so on..."

Yao Yuan stopped before smiling and saying, "These things need to be done, but there's no need to rush, we still have time... Barbie, thank you for your hard work in the past year. The government has given you a big angpao, you can check your online account later. The annual holiday will start tomorrow. As long as there's no emergency, you can rest for 10 days. Have fun and..."

"Happy New Year."

Chapter 419: Industrial Base Number Two

"I have nothing! I repeat again! I have nothing already!"

The usually gentle Cheng Wen roared at the top of his lungs. However, the eight individuals who stood smilingly before him didn't move. They lowered their heads respectfully, but none of them moved an inch, forming a soundless wall to pressure him.

Cheng Wen was at his wit's end. He lowered his voice and sighed. "There is honestly nothing I can do. The second mothership was supposed to be finished 16 days ago, but it is now still sitting in the garage. The Vice-Chancellor has come to question me many times. In fact, he said that if the mothership is still unable to be finished in the remaining 10 days of the month, then I will need to hand in my resignation letter as the manager of this base and return to my government post, if they are still willing to accept me that is. So, I truly cannot help any of you."

One of the middle-aged men smiled and said, "Manager Lee, Base Manager Lee, I've been waiting here since the beginning of the month; it has already been 20 days that I've waited. The materials that I was promised was 20 tons per day and 70 transport hovercrafts per day, but until today, I have only received less than 200,000 tons materials and 800 hovercrafts. Do you know how long the building process of the air circulation system at Area C has been halted for? Almost 10 days! Area C has started building, but the air circulation system is non-existent. Do you how hard that is for the workers that work there every day? They have to wear a spacesuits that weigh more 10 kilograms, and if a hole appears on someone's suit, it will be fatal. Manager Lee, I'm begging you, please give me my quota first for the sake of these workers. We have to take care of their lives."

After Cheng Wen heard that, his heart twitched with annoyance. Of course, the situation was not as bad as this man made it out to be. The spacesuits used by humanity now were created by the

latest electromagnetic nanobots. They wouldn't have been destroyed if shot directly by a gun, much less poked through by building materials. Furthermore, it used a double-layer sealing system, so if there truly was a leak, the material would self-recover and a warning light would appear in the system, signaling for its wearer to retreat to somewhere safe. Therefore, the whole plea was merely masking the man's desire for more materials.

Of course, if Cheng Wen had any left to give, he wouldn't have kept it for himself, but there was really nothing left. He was not a magician, he couldn't just pull stuff out of thin air.

Ever since the project of the first industrial base started, everyone had been focused on the managerial role that would overlook the whole project. The government servants, representatives, and even the engineers, they all salivated after this role. Individuals who believed they had the qualifications had started moving up and down the Hope to garner support. Of course, there weren't any bribes, they were going around asking favors. In other words, many forces were eyeing this manager post.

This was because this post carried a lot of weight, as this was the first step for building humanity's homeland. Whoever became the manager of this first industrial base would have great political standing in the future.

Initially, everyone thought Yao Yuan would take the post, and others assumed it was going to be Guang Zhen. After all, this base was instrumental to humanity, it was the heart of humanity in the New Solar System.

However, the final result surprised everyone. Neither Yao Yuan nor Guang Zhen took over the base, its managerial post was handed over to a rather unknown government worker on the Hope. It was Lee Cheng Wen.

Cheng Wen was indeed a fine choice. Ever since he took the job,

the chaotic base was arranged nicely and tidily and the progress of basically all the projects had increased. He flitted through his work responsibilities expertly, managing not only the base but also the external buildings attached to it. Everyone with eyes could see that this was Cheng Wen's time to shine and that it wouldn't take long for him to move closer to the central power of the Hope.

However, everything was not as perfect as it looked on the surface. The power that came with being the manager of the first industrial base was great, but with great power came great responsibility. Currently, the base had more 10,000 workers, and setting up the work schedule alone was a headache. The worst was, of course, the materials that were dwindling by the day.

The industrial base had been producing a great amount of materials. In fact, due to the expansion of the base, the base's daily production of metals had reached 10 million tons, but the amount of material exhaustion rose at a rate that was even scarier.

Around the industrial base, five surrounding areas had started being built. They would form the foundation for the City of Light Moon. They were respectively Areas A, B, C, D, and E. The five areas encapsulated all the necessary buildings for a town and the basic amenities for a space planet with no atmosphere, like super an electromagnetic ozone layer, internal air circulation, and water vapor circulation system as well as internal waste recycling and processing systems. These required a great amount of materials, an amount that couldn't be compared to the amount needed to start a city back on Earth.

In fact, other than Area A, which was prioritized, the remaining four areas' daily exhaustion was enough to make a small country on Earth go bankrupt. These were not the extent of Cheng Wen's concern. The other headache he had to deal with was Guang Zhen's ambitious New Solar System defense plan. The first step of that plan was to build three space fleets to defend the New Solar System. Even though the size and scale of each fleet had been

downsized multiple times, each of them was still large enough to cause a large country back on Earth to go bankrupt. In fact, just the materials needed for the mothership was enough to send anyone into despair. If not for the power of a peak level 2 space civilization, this plan was truly only a paper talk.

In conclusion, the first industrial base was running on negative; it was way over its workload. There were more than 6,000 mining robots underneath the base working on a discovered ore vein. The mining carried on non-stop for 24 hours and every ore was tossed into the base's several giant smelters to be processed and manufactured.

However, even so... the base had reached its limits. The giant electromagnetic smelters had been running at their maximum capacity for more than 100 days. This was already way beyond the recommended running period. If this was allowed to continue, some accidents might happen. These were equipment using energy reactor as energy sources, so if something bad happen to them, the number of fatalities would not be one or two.

Then there were the mining robots. According to the AI robot manual provided by the Workshop, the robots had to have their internal systems cleared and restarted every month. However, due to the workload, this was impossible because the process would require three to five days...

Cheng Wen had handed his report back to the Hope, but it was like dropping a stone into the sea, there was no news. The only message back from Yao Yuan was to try his best and the situation at the industrial base would be solved within this month...

While Cheng Wen was at the edge of despair, inside the Hope's captain's room, both Yao Yuan and Guang Zhen glared at each other with eyes red. They were close to fighting it out. Thankfully, neither was a rash person, so after a long time, Yao Yuan sighed. "Ol' Wong, it is not that I want to reject you, but the first industrial base really cannot support two great projects at the same time. The

City of Light Moon's Area B is opening for use soon, and after that, I will be able to create more manufacturing centers for public-use supplies. Do you know how long our current supply line is? If this is allowed to continue..."

Guang Zhen cut him off immediately. "Ol' Cap'n, it is not that I want to trouble you, but I have been very clear, building a space fleet is more important than this City of Light Moon... to be frank, if we are attacked by a level 3 space civilization now, do you think we will be able to defend this City of Light Moon? But with a space fleet, all of us will be able to flee together. Survival is the most important. Furthermore, we will need the spaceship fleet to protect the City of Light Moon and the first industrial base. Any other project can be stopped, but the building of First Human Fleet cannot be stopped!"

Yao Yuan was annoyed, but he tried his best to console Guang Zhen. Then he asked Barbie to get him a document file, then he told Guang Zhen, "Ol' Wong, since you've put it that way, I cannot use orders to force you. How about this: we talk this out. I will not ask you to cut down the space fleet, but you give me one month. Just one month and I will give you back your space fleet in its most original form, the one that has not been downsized. What do you think? Take a look at this proposal."

Guang Zhen picked it up and read it. Then he gasped. "The Industrial Base Number Two Proposal? I know about this. The first industrial base has reached its capacity, that I understand, but Ol' Yao, does the Hope have enough human resources to go around? I hear the public university has already asked for their program to be cut by one year, even the new students can't wait to join the production lines, but at this moment, do you have the manpower to start a second industrial base?"

"We don't." Yao Yuan shook his head but said with a smile, "But we can build one..."

"I've made my decision. The expansion of AI robot numbers will

start now!"

Chapter 420: The Human Advantage!

It had been two years since the Hope arrived at the New Solar System. Today, it was the year 23 according to the Human Calendar. It was another new year, another time for celebration. Time on the Hope was calculated according to Earth's old system, 24 hours every day and 365 days every year. For human beings, most progress was measured in terms of years.

"...To be honest, don't you all feel tired?"

At his private cocktail party, Blue 6 asked one of the representatives as he took a sip of the wine, "From the data shown, most people work for eight hours and rest for six every day. Some even work more than 10 hours, and that is within a period of 24 hours every day. Just how tiring is that?"

Blue 6 grimaced ostentatiously. "Then there is a measurement of a year that consists of only 365 days. There are so many things that need to be done in 365 days, and this causes the endless working within 24 hours. Do you know? There's a street near the Foreign Affairs Department where I can see a group of ladies open stalls to sell breakfast every morning. They do that every day with no rest. Do they really not feel tired?"

The representative talking to Blue 6 was a Caucasian man who was a famous lawyer back on Earth and had a gift of the gab. However, facing Blue 6's questions, he found himself at a loss for words. In fact, he couldn't even understand what Blue 6 was getting at.

Blue 6 finished the red wine in his glass and said, "Other than a few special departments, like the Barracks, royalty, and House of Representatives, no other work should be so harsh. No, this is beyond harsh, this can be said to be a form of torture. 30 percent of one's lifespan is used for working. This is a violation of living rights... Perhaps this is out of place for me to say, but I am

anticipating an anarchy to happen on the Hope."

"An anarchy?" The representative laughed as he too finished the red wine before replying, "You worry too much. In fact, this government is the most humane organization I've ever worked for. To be honest, I don't quite even understand what you're trying to say. Is work and study not the most important thing in life?"

Blue 6 gasped in shock. "Of course not, why would they be? The value of life lies in personal memories. In fact, there is a Blue Race philosopher who once said that the meaning of lies is to cultivate the best memories. Every laugh, every tear, every joy, and every sadness are the weight of one's memories, but work? To be frank, other than researching, I do not think hauling tons of material back and forth daily will be a good memory for life. When we're old and thinking back about this period of time, the thing we'll have is a string of empty days that look like one another, is it not?"

The representative was stumped and, of course, that was because he didn't really understand what Blue 6's point was.

Blue 6 seemed to notice the representative's lost expression then and he burst out laughing. "I do not mean any of that as criticism, of course. If anything, it is a shock combined with awe. You have to understand that each life is different and every life should be exciting, and human beings are... if I have describe them, they are like incredibly precise and tireless pieces of machinery. In fact, this situation that should only appear in AI robots are now replicated in humanity."

At this point, Blue 6 turned excited and said, "Do you know what this represents? This represents unparalleled potential and efficiency! The three biggest threats in space, I'm not familiar with the demon race, so we'll ignore that, but for the Zerg race and AI robots, the key to why they can be so feared in space is their efficiency! I've seen the threat of the Zerg race before through videos of them assaulting a planet. The whole world was covered by an endless sea of Zergs. They were numerous enough to swallow

up any civilization; it was a tsunami in terms of numbers.

"On the other hand, the strength of the AI robot lies in its fleet and weapon numbers. Their number is often beyond the normal capacity of any sensible civilization, they normally appear in the number reaching beyond billions, and they process and harvest every inch of the solar system they attack. After completely harvesting the whole solar system, their numbers increase and this cycle repeats itself endlessly. Of course, they will destroy any lifeforms that they meet. The only aspect in which they are inferior to the Zerg race is their inability to absorb technology. They inherit the technology from the civilization that created them and that is their natural weakness.

"Regardless, the reason why these two races are so scary is their size and efficiency. The Zerg race has a hive mind, and individual zerglings have no sentience. The mother nest can cover up an entire planet to consume and digest it to create more zergs. It is similar with AI robots. Other than the central consciousness, individual robots do not have sentience, they are replaceable. They keep on manufacturing and producing. The efficiency of these two races is something that can never be rivalled by normal civilizations."

Blue 6 turned to the representative and said seriously, "Do you know how long it would take the Blue Race to build a base this size? Do you know how long it would take for a peak level 3 space civilization to build a base this size?"

The representative was shocked. He was still trying to process the information about the Zerg race and AI robots. The sudden question surprised him, so he mumbled, "How long? One year? Or six months?"

"One year? Six months? You must be kidding." Blue 6 laughed good-naturedly. "It would be calculated in terms of decades. For a base this size, it would take at least 10 years, and no one would consider that slow. In fact, that is already quite fast by level 3 space

civilization standards.

"For a lifeform that has a lifespan of over one thousand years, using 10 years to finish a project is not considered a waste. Other than work, we have many things that occupy our lives, like spending ten days to organize a cocktail party, spending one year to finish a particularly insightful book, or spending several hundred days to cultivate a pot of plants. In contrast to work, aren't these activities more meaningful?"

The representative responded with utter disbelief. Blue 6 laughed. "Yes, I know what you're going to say. Perhaps in your eyes, those activities are the ones that are truly time-wasters because they contribute nothing to the civilization, and if this were allowed to continue, the race will eventually enter senescence and die off, but... which civilization leaders don't know that? It's basic knowledge, but we're talking about over one thousand years of lifespan. I can do this for this year and that for next year, and ten years later I can do this and ten years after that, I can do that. After all, this is one thousand years, so what if I waste one or two hundred years? Furthermore, this is how my ancestors lived their one thousand years and it will be how the future generation of the Blue Race live their one thousand years. In that case, who will be willing to have a robot-esque life? No one!"

When Blue 6 reached this point, he appeared to be quite down, but he still continued, "A famed Blue Race philosopher once said that the most important thing for a civilization is not their technology, soul, or even cosmic adapter, but a common goal for which the members of the civilization could lay their lives down! I do wish to ask, what is the goal of humanity?"

The representative seemed to understand Blue 6's line of questioning and his lowered tone represented a disappointment, a disappointment at his mother race. The representative thought about it and said, "I cannot speak for other people or even the whole human race, but for me personally... I simply wish to return

to that blue planet, its warmth, its sea, its blue sky, and its clouds... for that swath of blue, I am willing to lay down my life."

"And that's it." Blue 6 smiled. "The unity of the human civilization for the sake of a common goal, a reason to fight. Humanity is... a new lifeform that has not been contaminated by the cosmos. Do you know why am I so willing to join your civilization and even lay down my life for it? Because humanity is the civilization that has the most potential of all the space civilizations I have ever met, a civilization that can support my hopes and dreams!"

Blue 6 sighed and said, "In fact, when I was still in the Blue Race, I once saw some confidential records from the Royal Library. It was an information that was leaked by a level 4 space civilization. It was an observation of the delineation of space civilizations, low tier, middle tier, and high tier. The biggest hurdle for any space civilization is moving from one tier to another, because when one reaches that peak, almost all of the civilization's motivation has been exhausted. Every level of space civilization has its own unique motivation. For example, for low level space civilizations, that would be survival. The motivation for middle tier and high tier space civilizations was not mentioned in the records, so I have no information about those.

"However, there is one thing that is certain: humanity's motivation is at its all-time high. Perhaps... humanity has the chance to really evolve into a middle tier space civilization before that motivation runs out."

Blue 6 sat up with excitement glowing in his eyes. He walked to the window and looked out at the rowdy working area. The place that keeps on introducing new changes day after day...

"No, I am certain, humanity will be able to evolve into a middle tier space civilization successfully, that is my belief!"

Chapter 421: Happiness

Blue 6's words passed through many channels before it was recorded and eventually landed on Yao Yuan's desk. When Yao Yuan picked up the record in the middle of dealing with other documents, he smiled. After all, they had been to a Shelter and were exposed to the culture of other alien civilizations before, so they knew about humanity's advantage. The most obvious advantage was that humanity had retained the perspective of time left from Earth.

Humanity's perspective on time had changed over the decades, from the several decades as one cycle in the prehistoric era, every decade as one cycle during the Renaissance, and finally every year as one cycle in the modern era. The most current perspective on time was also called the city dweller's perspective. Business, nervousness, and assiduousness were its hallmarks, but it was for the sake of efficiency.

Initially, when they entered space, many scholars predicted that the perspective of time for alien civilizations would use every day as one cycle, but the reality was far from that. Most alien civilizations used several decades as one cycle.

The cause of this was simple. When a prehistoric civilization was forced to leave its home planet, the civilization would retain its perspective on time from its old planet. However, very soon... this would lead to a tragedy!

Yes, when a prehistoric civilization left its home planet, its technological level would at most be at level 1 or at the edge of becoming level 2. Even though it might have a large fleet or motherships, it wouldn't support a population of over ten billion... Just look at humanity. When humanity left Earth, it had roughly seven billion people; however, how many of those had escaped into space?

Regardless, even half of that number would mean 3.5 billion, and they would have to exist in space for several hundred or even thousands of years before they would reach another solar system. They also had to depend on their supply storage. Under such circumstances, if the population maintained the same perspective of time from their home planet, overworking themselves every day, they would feel lethargic in a week and probably tired from life in a year due to a lack of notable progress. This might cause even more of a waste of resources, and 8 out of 10 new space civilizations exhausted themselves out in this manner.

The rest of the civilization might survive internal strife and most of its population would die before they reached another solar system. At the same time, the perspective on time would slowly change, and this perspective was inherited from one generation to the next. Even when they had enough materials and supplies in storage, the new perspective on time had settled. This wouldn't be out of place because most space civilizations shared the same perspective on time.

"One year to read a book? Now that is the true meaning of a waste of time!" Yao Yuan scoffed before putting the records down and continuing with his work.

The things that occupied Yao Yuan's time were definitely important and extremely varied. Even though his secretary had helped him filter most out, there were still many that needed his permission and approval. He was so busy because the 23rd New Year was coming soon. He intended to finish these few projects before the holiday so that they would be a gift for the people.

They were mostly about the assignments of housing in the City of Light Moon!

It had been two years since the Hope landed on the moon, and the main construction on City of Light Moon had officially ended about 10 days ago. Only the unimportant projects and city beautification remained, and those weren't that urgent.

Therefore, the issue of housing was pushed forward. A few days ago, there was a population-wide poll. More than 80 percent of the population had faith in human technology and believed in the safety of the City of Light Moon. In other words, more than 300,000 people hoped to move to the City of Light Moon. This number was more than half of humanity's total population, so Yao Yuan had to be cautious with his decision.

After that, the inspection group for the City of Light Moon returned with their report. The City of Light Moon's safety inspection was a pass. The citizens could move in safely now. At the same time, the report made by the inspection group stated that the maximum capacity of the city was 300,000 people, but the optimal population number was 150,000. In other words, only half of the hopefuls could migrate to the City of Light Moon...

Yao Yuan looked at the report in his hands and a headache appeared. This was a difficult decision to make, because it could lead to complaints of unfairness very easily. If one party was forced to stay on the Hope but another party was to go to the City of Light Moon when both of them were normal citizens on the Hope, and one party was not more impressive than the other, it would lead to resentment... Yao Yuan also didn't think this was something that could be solved by leaving it to the people themselves...

"I guess we'll continue to do the assignment according to contribution points..."

Yao Yuan sighed and made his decision. This was the fairest decision among the many unfair choices. Of course, priorities would be given to the families of the fallen heroes, then came the surviving heroes and their families.

After that would be the scientists and their families. Then the rest would be based on working age. The longer they had worked for human government, the more priority they would be offered...

"Lastly, all representatives and government officials will have to

stay on the Hope until all the citizens who hope to move to the City of Light Moon have already moved there." Yao Yuan concluded the document with this proclamation. This was to suppress the complaints of abuse of power. With this proclamation in place, there wouldn't be such complaints.

Of course, whether this might cause an uproar among the representatives and government officials was a different question entirely...

Thinking about this, Yao Yuan smirked coldly. If that truly happened, he wouldn't mind taking some actions in return, because the Hope was lacking in cheap labor...

Just like that, one month later, the move to the City of Light Moon finally started. Almost all the families of the fallen heroes and surviving heroes chose to move to the city, it was the same for most scientists. One month later, around 170,000 people had moved into the City of Light Moon, there were about 30,000 families. Similarly, many important departments on the Hope started their move to the City of Light Moon. The first was naturally the government departments, the second was the House of Representatives, following that were the public amenities like the banks, hospitals, schools, and the like. One month later, almost every public center had been moved to the City of Light Moon. In fact, the Hope now had become more like a pure residential area. There were transport shuttles that ferried the people to and from both places every day. In fact, there were members of the House of Representatives that urged the government to build a super speed highway connecting the Hope and the City of Light Moon.

Zhang San's family was exceptionally lucky. First, his father's working age was long. Furthermore, he was part of the maintenance crew who helped fix the Hope when they were on both Planet Sahara and the new planet. At both of these times, humanity's technology was not as advanced as it was now. If the spacesuits he was wearing at the time were damaged in any way,

his life would've been over, meaning he had put his life on the line to help fix the ship. Therefore, his father's contribution points and working age were both above the curve.

Furthermore, Zhang San was leading a production group for the construction of industrial base number two, so they were given a residence at the City of Light Moon. It was a quintessential bungalow with its own garden, hovercraft garage, and pool. The three story building had a balcony and beautiful interior design. It was more than enough to support the need of a family, in fact... Zhang San's mother discovered that she was pregnant a few months ago. Zhang San was going to welcome his little brother or sister soon.

Today, Zhang San was shopping at a newly opened mall at the City of Light Moon with his girlfriend. The place was crowded due to the recent move and the upcoming new year. H-coins flowed like water. In fact, many things were sold out, like the new planet's mink caterpillar skin. It was a fur material made from a caterpillar that had mink skin. The rug weaved from this material was soft and fluffy. It was suitable for both winter and summer. It was a luxury item and cost at least three or four months' worth of Zhang San's salary. However, he saw many people carrying one around like they were free.

For some reason, when he saw this, Zhang San was reminded of his mother's smiling face when she first laid eyes on their new home and the excitement shown by his father when he found out his wife was pregnant. He subconsciously reached for his girlfriend's hand and she smiled back at him.

"This is... the meaning of happiness," Zhang San said to himself.

His girlfriend looked at him and asked, "What did you say?"

"No... it's nothing, it's just..."

There seemed to be a fire burning in Zhang San's eyes.

"I wish to protect this, this source of happiness...

"Even if I have to lay my life down for it!"

Chapter 422: City of Light Moon (1)

"Wait, stop here!"

Simon Peter yelled. His voice didn't sound like that of a 90-year-old man. In fact, his appearance didn't look like he was 90, at most 40, even though his actual age was indeed approaching a century already.

Simon Peter was once a famous director on Earth. His directed films had won several Oscars, and he was a freelance director. His documentaries on underdeveloped countries and charity advertisements won him the lifetime achievement award from the film academy. In conclusion, he was the shot caller in terms of everything video-related; he was the most influential director on the Hope.

Ever since humanity escaped into space, he too had suffered through the tragedies and progress humanity had experienced along the way. In fact, the many videos that documented the history of these 23 years were all directed by him or his disciples. However, the constant wandering in space didn't give him the opportunity to really showcase his talent.

Now, the Hope had landed on the New Solar System. The great progress brought with it an expansion of job vacancies, increase in overall salary, the lowering of product prices, and grand scale moving. All these signified the arrival of humanity's golden years in space.

Under these circumstances, Simon Peter's work fever ignited like never before. Ever since the video showing the planet at the New Year party two years ago, his productions came out one after another. Other than charity advertisements and various short films, he also directed a full-length feature. It was a space war between the Black Star Troopers and a spaceship fleet. The film mirrored humanity's war with the space merchants. The sci-fi flick

was a great success, and if it was revealed back on Earth, it would make people's jaws drop. The technology used was far too advanced.

Similarly, the film had great reception among the human government. Before the arrival of this film, the Hope's entertainment only consisted of news and old movies taken from Earth. The arrival of this film brought about the advent of a movie fever... Even though the Hope only had eight or nine directors, it didn't dampen the public's desire to become movie stars. Many people registered to join the movie crews, and during this period, many new films appeared on the Hope like mushrooms after a spring rain. Simon Peter's contribution to this change couldn't be underestimated.

The 23rd new year was coming soon. Simon Peter was invited by the government to shoot another video about life on the City of Light Moon. After naming his own conditions and having them accepted, Simon Peter started working immediately.

Simon Peter's conditions weren't hard, he just needed a large hovercraft and a group of technicians to pilot it. After all, this was going to be shot on the City of Light Moon, so protection wouldn't be necessary. Of course, his own film crew had to tag along as well. Not to be missed was also the necessary equipment, so a large hovercraft was not an out-of-place demand.

Just like that, Simon Peter's film crew departed. Their destination was a spot about 10,000 meters above the City of Light Moon. Using the hovercraft's floatation ability, they were taking a scene of the city below.

"It's beautiful, Teacher."

In his crew, a young girl looked down at the city with a pair of glowing eyes. The silvery base glowed with the unique charm of a bustling city. In the darkness of space, the city was as beautiful as a glittering pearl.

"It is beautiful," Simon Peter concurred. "It is because of this that we have to record everything. When our future generations see this, they will understand the history and the hardships that came before them, then they will hopefully learn to appreciate it even more."

The City of Light Moon was a manifestation of the technology from a space civilization at the peak of level 2. It was constructed by the hands of 10,000 people over the span of two years. It was built on a plateau and not underground using superelectromagnetic filming technology. It was an open city like most cities back on Earth. To mirror the day and night cycle, the superelectromagnetic converging light technology was used. Looked from the inside, the sky wasn't a piece of inky space, but a blue sky. Combined with the 3D imaging technology, they could even create birds and clouds. Life in the City of Light Moon was indeed several thousand times better than the cramped life on the Hope.

Looking from the outside, the city glittered, but it was not a light that was harsh to the eyes; one could even see the outline of the city clearly. Viewed from afar, this city on the surface of the moon truly had the charm of a pearl, and this was humanity's biggest pride, the most miraculous industrial miracle, the City of Light Moon that was built in the span of two years!

"Okay, we're done here. Let's keep moving."

With Simon Peter's order, the hovercraft started to descend towards the City of Light Moon...

At the same time, along the Light Moon's orbit, two large, rectangular battleships surrounded by 10 guardian spaceships were patrolling the area around the Light Moon. Guang Zheng, who was seated in the captain's seat, was looking at the large hovercraft through the battleship's surveillance video.

"Checking of internal code completed. It is Mr. Simon Peter's

camera crew, their destination is the City of Light Moon."

Beside Guang Zhen, a young adjutant reported as he read from the data shown on screen.

Guang Zhen nodded and said, "This is not easy. The City of Light Moon has finished being built and the moving is done. Humanity's first space base is already a done thing, but our New Solar System's first fleet is still only so large..."

The adjutant smiled and said, "Commander, actually, you needn't be so worried. It has only been two years, hasn't it? Furthermore, even though this fleet is still small, it is more than enough to destroy the old Earth in its entirety. According to a rumor, hasn't Professor Bo Li been working on the actual application of level 3 space civilizations' plasma reactor? Who knows, maybe very soon, we'll all be piloting level 3 space civilization battleships and this fleet will be considered outdated."

Guang Zhen laughed, straightened his cap, and said, "The first fleet is returning to base. After restocking supplies, our target will be the fourth meteorite cluster. The objective of the mission is to conduct surveillance before the New Year!"

"Yes. Captain's order..."

Chapter 423: City of Light Moon (2)

The New Solar System had in total five meteorite clusters. To be more accurate, there were only four that counted, because the fifth was at the edge of the solar system and couldn't be detected under normal circumstances. However, that was according to Guang Zhen, the New Solar System's first and best line of defense. The best solution when facing an assault was to limit the enemy outside of your own territory. This whole solar system was humanity's territory, so they had to try their best to lead the battle to the edge of the New Solar System.

This place was far from Homeward Planet. For a to and fro trip, even with humanity's current technology, it would take four months. Furthermore, this place was far away from the sun, so the place was shrouded in darkness and extremely unstable. Meteorites would crash into each other with no sense of reason, causing space catastrophes. Even with humanity's current technology, they couldn't shield themselves perfectly from this tragedy.

Due to this, even though the City of Light Moon had reached its completion, the New Solar System's first defense line was still left in the dust. After the 23rd New Year, Bo Li and a few other famed physicists unveiled humanity's newest scientific breakthrough, a breakthrough that would mark humanity's scientific trajectory for years to come... They had mastered the core technology of the plasmatic ion fission reactor. The cold agglutination reactors they had been using would all be updated to plasmatic reactors. This would increase the energy output by several hundred times and this meant that there was finally hope for the construction of the New Solar System's first defense line.

"Energy umbrella self-propulsion corridor!"

Just like everyone on the Hope knew the marking of a level 2 space civilization was electromagnetic energy, the marking of a

level 3 space civilization was plasma energy, specifically the variance of plasma energy's practical applications, like the creation of plasma energy shields, plasma weapons, and faster space travelling methods.

This was humanity's 24th planning meeting and discussion. Guang Zhen represented the Barracks to propose the creation of the first defense line. Of course, when this was proposed, it was instantly questioned by the building committee and the committee from the City of Light Moon. After all, even though humanity now had two industrial bases and the City of Light Moon had been completed, industrial base number two and the New Solar System's first fleet were still under construction. Adding another humongous project would add a great pressure to the production team.

The reason given by these people was not random, and their reason was valid. It was the location of the proposed first defense line. The meteorite base was too far away, so it would require four months of travelling. This would mean a great exhaustion in terms of logistics, and the human power required to accomplish this would be huge.

However, when these people came up with these protests, Guang Zhen used the following phrase to counter them all. With a nod, a document was given to everyone present.

"Different from the particle flux accelerator of level 2 space civilizations, level 3 space civilizations use something called the 'Energy Umbrella Self-propulsion Corridor.' It uses strong plasmatic energy to activate the adhesive property of space ions and anti-directional propeller to create an umbrella-shaped ionic condenser. Under this state, the maximum speed that can be reached is 10 times faster than the particle flux accelerator! Similarly, the same mechanism can be replicated when one wishes to slow down. The same umbrella would be created in front of the ship and the ship would be able to stop. This is the navigational

technology of a level 3 space civilization."

The faces of everyone who read the document were filled with shock. In fact, the document stated very clearly that the technology came from the first genius of the Hope... Professor Bo Li. This was something she had come up with when the Academy achieved the breakthrough with the plasmatic ion fission reactor. In other words, Guang Zhen had come prepared; he had even requested this document from Bo Li before he arrived...

While everyone was still in shock, Guang Zhen scoffed internally. He was proud of what he did. Indeed, if he hadn't requested those documents from Bo Li earlier, his proposal would've definitely been rejected.

These idiots, did they not understand? In this space age, without enough power to protect themselves, humanity was like a delicious piece of meat. The new base and humanity itself will be hunted the moment they are discovered by other space civilizations.

"Just like I suggested, the New Solar System's defense system must begin immediately. Other than the first human fleet, the five great defense lines, as crucial parts of the defense system, must start work soon... Of course, I understand that we are running low on resources, so other than the necessary engineers and workers, I do not need extra manpower. I only need AI robots as the environment there is not habitable by human standards. Regarding the issue of distance, this document is my answer.

"Energy Umbrella Self-propulsion Corridor, it is a new concept using the energy umbrella model, create a giant energy umbrella propeller between the destination and the beginning point to form a controllable flow of space ions. Any object that enters it will be influenced by the energy umbrella. The accelerator created by the energy umbrella increases its travel speed. The rudimentary assessment puts the time of travel between Homeward Planet and the first defense line base to be 15 days!"

15 days?!

With this, the expressions of many people changed. Even though they didn't want to add another burden to the building list, the allure of 15 days of travelling time was too high. After all, the cosmos was too big for humanity to traverse. Evidence could be taken from the New Solar System itself. The time of travel to move from the City of Light Moon to the nearest meteorite cluster and return from there would exhaust 10 to 15 days, but if this corridor was constructed, then...

Everything else that followed was easy. Guang Zhen's proposal was accepted unanimously. The human government would start building the corridor within the 24th year and the first defense line base would start its construction at the end of the 24th year. At the same time, at this discussion, many other projects were passed, like supervising the Academy to perfect and build the energy umbrella technology. Special attention needed to be paid to its safety. The moment the system was online, all the long-distance travelling shuttles humanity currently owned would have to be adapted. After that, humanity would start building its third industrial base. It would be situated on the meteorite cluster closest to the City of Light Moon. Compared to mining on the moon, meteorite clusters were where the minerals gathered. They could shove a whole meteorite into the smelter and get the purified mineral out the other end. This was much more efficient than mining!

During the meeting, expansion of the City of Light Moon as well as upgrades for industrial bases 1 and 2's reactors were also discussed. This included things like the social security, health security, education problems, as well as city planning, like the allocation of streets. This meeting had decided everything that was planned in the 24th year, and the meeting lasted for two days. When it was finally over, Yao Yuan collapsed directly on the table.

In the government building at the City of Light Moon, Guang

Zhen hummed a delightful tune while sitting across from Yao Yuan sipping his tea. When Yao Yuan signed another document, he grumbled, "You've been an annoyance since this morning. I don't have time to guess your thoughts, speak your mind if you have something to say."

Guang Zhen replied happily, "There's nothing important, really..."

"Then, leave." Yao Yuan concluded. "Although I have say, you're mighty impressive for sneaking behind my back to do this energy umbrella corridor project. Do you know what you've done? The amount of work and headaches you've added for me? The arrangements of the two industrial bases and the expansion of the City of Light Moon and its daily ongoings are not enough, and now you want me to build this first defense line base? In any case, I'm busy, so if there's nothing important, leave!"

Guang Zhen didn't get angry but laughed happily. Then he added with a smile, "I came because I have something to discuss with you... Nothing important... It's about the Steel Ball..."

"Steel Ball?" Yao Yuan became alert instantly. He looked at Guang Zhen seriously. "Ol' Wong, I hope you're not serious. I left the military in your hands and I will oversee politics, but this Steel Ball issue... that is off the table. This control system still has a lot of issues and the pressure on its wearer is heavy. Currently, if it's used by Homo Evolutis other than myself, they might go into coma like Jay and Eva. Who will be responsible when that happens? You or me? So this is not up for discussion."

Guang Zhen laughed awkwardly before adding, "I just heard from my cousin, Bo Li, that she has done great improvements on the prototype, including changes made to the control system. Even though it is still not yet completed, to quote her, when it is completed, even normal Homo Evolutis will be able to use it... Of course, it has to be an S-grade Homo Evolutis. There will be issues of overexertion, but it will not cause coma, at most a heavy case of

lethargy."

Yao Yuan looked at Guang Zhen seriously, and it was at this point that he commented, "Continue..."

Guang Zhen also became serious, but before long, he started smiling in an effort to curry favor with Yao Yuan. "There's no need to be so serious... Fine, I'll continue. What I meant was, such a powerful weapon is a waste if not used. Cousin Bo Li is going to continue researching this Steel Ball, right? I hear she is preparing to build three prototypes, 0, 1, and 2. All three prototypes have improved control systems, and the direction of improvement in each one will be different because she also doesn't know which direction is the correct one. Therefore, when the three prototypes are completed, I wish to discuss with you the possibility of sending three S-grade Homo Evolutis to test them out..."

Yao Yuan lowered his head to focus on his document. After a long time, he replied, "Request denied. The Steel Ball is indeed powerful, but its safety rating is too low. Even if the three prototypes are ready, I will not allow human experimentation. Of course, don't think that I will go test them out myself. That is not possible... unless that hidden Whisperer is found. Now that you've brought this up, may I remind you not to send out your people to go look for this hidden Whisperer? I've told you the reason why, we are not looking for a convict or criminal, we're looking for a scientist that should have a positive impression of the human government. Therefore, we have to wait for them to come to us. Don't think I don't know about what you've been trying to do. Bo Li is a powerful Whisperer, that much is true, but her power is not related to this control system, so my standpoint regarding these three Steel Ball prototypes is the same: they are too dangerous. That's all!"

Guang Zhen still maintained a smile on his face, but his pupils kept darting around. Yao Yuan knew what this meant. After all, they had worked with each other for more than a decade already.

He said seriously, "Also, don't think about sending out the Black Star Troopers on your own to test out the prototypes, this is not fair to them... and that is an order."

Guang Zhen was startled but could do nothing but stand up straight and salute. "Sir, yes, Sir!"

All the projects were carried out according to plan. As time moved on, the projects for the 24th year were completed one after another. The creation of plasma reactors had been completed. Their safety and efficiency had been confirmed after multiple experiments and testing. The reactors in the City of Light Moon and the two industrial bases had been upgraded and certain scientists even predicted humanity would become a level 3 space civilization by the end of the 25th year!

At the same time, more AI robots were produced. The moment the Energy Umbrella Self-Propulsion Corridor was created, they would be sent to the edge of New Solar System to start work on the first defense line base.

This group of AI robots was kept in storage until they were needed. Among the rows of stationary robots, one of them suddenly wobbled slightly before going completely still again. No one saw this and it was not recorded on any video surveillance.

Everything appeared so normal and fine on the surface...

Chapter 424: Departure

"Huh... so this is the psychokinetic floating cannon?"

Yun Si looked at the three chopsticks in his hands that were... well, the size of chopsticks!

Yue Xuan looked at him excitedly, the expression on her face saying "praise me!"

Yun Si scratched his head with befuddlement and told Yue Xuan, "And then? How does one use this thing? What's its purpose? Energy exhaustion? Is it safe? Basically, you passed me three chopsticks and told me it's the psychokinetic floating cannon and it's all smiles at me... Are you pulling my leg?"

Yue Xuan still continued in an excited tone, "And yes, they took a long time to create. I've used all the materials we purchased and have used superelectromagnetic thought inductors that can tap into Homo Evolutis' brainwaves. It is a weapon only operable by Homo Evolutis, it's different from the system I gave you last time. For that control system, if the normal human beings have enough brain activity, reaction power, and sense of space, they can eventually use the system, but this thing is only useable by Homo Evolutis, so its power..."

"Then have you used it?" Yun Si could only play along.

Yue Xuan shook her head, saying, "No, I'm not you, I'm a Whisperer. I've discovered through my research that spiritual-type Homo Evolutis like Whisperers and Animas are different from other Homo Evolutis. We're dealing with inward diffusion, and you're the opposite. What created this, though, I still have no clue as there is too little actual data. Other than you and myself, there are no other Homo Evolutis who I can experiment on, but don't worry about that, this psychokinetic floating cannon is definitely safe, believe me... Of course, due to the lack of materials, and the devices that I need aren't sold on the market anyway, so the

product is a bit rough, but it is completely safe..."

Until the end, Yue Xuan's voice petered to nothing more than a whisper, and Yun Si gave her an "I thought so" expression.

"In other words, this thing might self-destruct if I'm not too careful? And you dare say that this is completely safe..." Yun Si grumbled while scratching his chin.

Yue Xuan pouted and retorted, "This is all your fault to begin with. If you hadn't asked me to hide myself, I would have had enough materials to work with. Do you not know how much I've been saving to come up with these things? Why do you think I did all that? Who do you think it's for?"

Yun Si's heart softened and he moved to give Yue Xuan a hug. "I'm just worried about you. Who knows whether the place will blow up in the middle of your experiment or not? Why don't you stop doing these experiments already? At least until you find yourself a good lab and equipment."

"No." Yue Xuan shook her head, then she turned to Yun Si and said, "My Whisperer power appeared naturally, and the voices in my head won't stop. Experimenting and creating are second nature to me, I am compelled to do them. Also, haven't you been telling me how weak and insignificant humanity is in space? We haven't even become a level 3 space civilization yet, and even if we did, we'd just be a new level 3 space civilization. Our foundation is still too young compared to other space civilizations. In fact, if a large colony of a level 2 space civilization throws their full strength at us, we might only earn a narrow victory, so under these circumstances... I have to continue to experiment and create!"

Yun Si looked at the serious expression on Yue Xuan's face and sighed. It made him feel bad for keeping Yue Xuan's ability a secret simply because he had prejudices against the human government... maybe he truly need to see things with a new eye. Perhaps it was time for Yue Xuan to reveal herself...

"I understand." Yun Si put on his military cap and said, "I will test out this psychokinetic floating cannon, but please stop your experiments at least until I return from this New Jupiter patrol. Also, my credit card is with you, right? If you need any money, just draw from it. The pay for the Black Star Troopers is really high..."

Then Yun Si left the room, leaving behind Yue Xuan, who was smiling sweetly on her own. A long time later, she mumbled as if suddenly remembering it, "Shucks, I forgot to tell him what to be careful of..."

After the completion of the City of Light Moon, humanity could be said to have a permanent home in the New Solar System. The expansion around the City of Light Moon was to make this home more comfortable.

However, everyone from the highest official to the youngest child knew about the danger of the cosmos. There was no kindness and charity in space; therefore, to protect this new home, they had to have a strong and powerful military, and among these fighting forces, the Black Star Troopers was definitely the best.

Currently, there were 227 Black Star Troopers being split into 22 units. They had 1,690 of the latest combat jets and each unit had their own battleship. Of course, due to the constraints of time, only the first five units had battleships that were the size of the Hope, while the rest had guardian battleships.

Each unit had a logistics, maintenance, and informatics subunit. Since the City of Light Moon was completed, if the Black Star Troopers still maintained its usual unified group structure, then it would be such a waste... yes, a waste.

As a military unit that consisted of all Homo Evolutis, when they were up against enemies from a similar level of technology, they were practically invincible. One fighting a hundred was an understatement, because a single Black Star Trooper could turn the tide of the battle. Even though the advantage of numbers was

the way to go for normal space civilizations, for Black Star Troopers, it was an issue of quality over quantity. Spreading them out into smaller units was the better use of their abilities.

The Black Star Troopers answered only to the highest military officials of the human government. In other words, the Black Star Troopers only answered to Yao Yuan and Guang Zhen. Under the situation where Yao Yuan and Guang Zhen were not around, the leader of each unit would be responsible to look over their own members. They had the power to decide whether to join the fray or to retreat. They were not tied to any power on the Hope, and this included the House of Representatives, the human government, the Barracks, and even the headquarters of the Defense Unit. The Black Star Troopers were an isolated force and the strongest military power available to humanity!

Yun Si was the vice-leader of the 19th unit, and the leader of that unit was Zhang Heng. According to the patrol map set up by Yao Yuan, the 19th unit's patrol zone was between the City of Light Moon and New Jupiter. Other than daily patrol, the 19th unit also had the job scope of being a mobile patrol. To put it simply, whenever there was an upcoming mission that was not within the jurisdiction of the 19th unit, they would still need to go intervene and provide help. In fact, other than the first 10 Black Star Trooper units, most of the other units were mobile patrols.

Yun Si was leading four Black Star Troopers. He was driving a small battleship towards New Jupiter. The other four members of the unit were being led by Zhang Heng towards the first defense line using the battleship assigned to their unit. They were escorting a construction crew whose destination was the construction site at the fringe of the New Solar System.

Just as Yun Si was toying with the three chopsticks, Zhang Heng sat in the captain's chair, spacing out.

After the escort mission was done, Zhang Heng's mission would be over. Of course, this mission was simple. In fact, it was more

like training than anything. Zhang Heng didn't think too much of it because this was merely a minor mission. His mind was more focused on his own personal relationships.

Yes, he was still single, and the crazy part was, even though he intended to get married, he wasn't sure who his bride should be...

Of course, he couldn't share these issues with outsiders, so Zhang Heng could only work it out in his mind on his own. Suddenly, Zhang Heng raised his head with a confused "hmm". Instantly, everyone in the bridge turned to look at him. One of the soldiers asked concernedly, "Captain, you've discovered danger?"

It was already common knowledge that Zhang Heng was the strongest Diviner on the Hope, so his sudden reaction sent chills down their spines. However, Zhang Heng merely shook his head and said, "No, it's not that, perhaps... it was my imagination."

Just like that, the construction crew escorted by Zhang Heng's unit reached the first defense line one and a half months later. The construction crew consisted of 25 senior engineers and 100 new engineers. Zhang San was one of them.

At the same time, the construction crew brought with them 5,000 AI robots to be used as the labor force...

Yes, 5,000 AI robots!

Chapter 425: Thoughts

Zhang San looked out at the empty darkness. Meteorite pieces of varying sizes were floating freely, their occasional collisions causing them to split into even smaller pieces. This... was the edge of the New Solar System, the place where all the remnants that didn't form into an actual planets congregated and where comets were formed. This... was a forbidden zone for life.

The general temperature was lower than -220 degree, lowest at -250 degree. In this place of zero vacuum space, exposure would mean fatality. Furthermore, due to the location's long distance from the City of Light Moon, being accidentally deserted would mean certain death.

This was why the progress of the first defense line was delayed until the latter half of the 24th year. The first batch of construction crews consisted of mostly Defense Unit soldiers. According to Guang Zhen, the Defense Unit was a troop that inherited the spirit of humanity that was not afraid of difficulty and sacrifice as long as it would be able to help the progress of humanity. The first set of projects for the first defense line were going to be carried out by Defense Unit using the AI robots to create a temporary stronghold.

This was on the biggest meteorite among the loose cluster. The meteorite was about one-seventh the size of the Light Moon, and the stronghold was built within the meteorite... Naturally, it had to be built underground and not the open way like the City of Light Moon because one, the project would be too large, two, it would be too open to attack. In comparison, having it underground would help with defense.

However, due to the harsh environment, when the first draft of the stronghold was completed, three soldiers were sacrificed due to an accident. They couldn't even retrieve one of their bodies. Due to this incident, Guang Zhen was brought before the military tribunal

and his plan of using the Defense Unit soldiers to build the first defense line was thus brought to a close.

In fact, he should have seen this coming. The Defense Unit soldiers consisted of a large amount of western soldiers, and one of the zeitgeists among these soldiers was personal human rights. In the current human government, the group that had the greatest benefit behind the scientists was not the representatives but these soldiers. To put it simply, Guang Zhen wanted to use these soldiers as disposable builders? Impossible!

To prevent Guang Zhen from doing that, the human government shifted a large amount of money and resources to aid in the construction of the first defense line. They also handpicked a large amount of engineers to join the construction crew that would build the first defense line base.

Zhang San was one of the engineers selected. When they were searching for engineers to join the project, he volunteered. His reason wasn't because he loved humanity so much or thought the first defense line was important, no, he did it because after a year of training at the first defense line, he would become a senior engineer assistant, one step closer to being an actual senior engineer. The benefits he would get would be greater than the ones he got now as a new engineer... After all, Zhang San's family still owed a large amount of housing debt. Even though the loan didn't have high interest rates, he wished to clear it as soon as possible. After all, he wished to marry his girlfriend when she graduated from university. It was why he ended up there.

Initially, Zhang San thought the job would be easy. After all, human technology was already so advanced. Even though the conditions there would be harsh, there wouldn't be any threats to his safety. He only needed to suffer through one year and a bright future awaited him. However, when he arrived there, he would understand the true meaning of loneliness, silence, and isolation...

Yes, the overall feeling Zhang San had when he was working

there was loneliness, the loneliness of humanity in the greater cosmos, the sense of helplessness and insignificance. He could see the cosmos from the City of Light Moon, but at least then he was surrounded by his family, friends, girlfriend, and the general public to offset the sense of loneliness, but here, that feeling of loneliness was amplified several times over. In fact, it had taken over his mind.

He wished to return, to return to the City of Light Moon, to the company of friends!

This wish continued to get amplified. Zhang San knew that this was some kind of psychological sickness. In fact, he had sought out the help of the stronghold's psychologist and was given prescription drugs, but it was no use. The feeling kept growing, and if not for his own force of will, he would have gone crying to beg for them to send him back to the City of Light Moon.

"There's only six months left, then I will be released from the clutches of this loneliness..."

Zhang San consoled himself. At the time, there was an AI robot standing beside him. It was his working assistant to help him with taxing manual labor. What Zhang San didn't discover was the glow in the robot's eyes when he said those things. It meant that the robot was also processing and thinking something.

"Are you... lonely?"

These three words were issued through a mesh up of system audio. Zhang San looked at the robot with surprise. AI robots were implanted with simple AI so they could communicate with humans, so the fact that the robot had spoken didn't surprise Zhang San.

"Yes, very lonely." Zhang San looked out the window with melancholy and continued, "The books say that when my ancestors left the home planet, the first trial they faced was the feeling of bottomless loneliness of the cosmos. The feeling of human life

being as insignificant as a piece of sand. When I read it, I couldn't understand what it meant, but now I understand it perfectly. In fact, the feeling of loneliness is even greater than it was described by words. This loneliness..."

"What is the meaning of... loneliness?" The AI robot's eyes shone and it continued to ask.

Zhang San seemed to have forgotten he was conversing with a robot and continued to explain, "Loneliness has many meaning, but the most basic explanation is that there is only oneself in the whole universe. One has no friends, no family, no one of its kind, one is alone in the cosmos. This kind of loneliness... would push one towards willing self-destruction."

"Alone... oneself... no friends, family..."

The AI robot's eyes shone continuously. The light in its eyes became brighter and more erratic until it finally caught Zhang San's attention. He looked to the robot and commanded, "Shut down! You've fallen into logical chaos! I order you to shut down instantly!"

However, to Zhang San's surprise, the AI robot didn't follow his order. Its eyes continued to shine. Right then, Zhang San finally understood what had happened. This AI robot had achieved sentience breakthrough. It was the topic of Singularity he had read about in university. It was something scary, and one wouldn't notice it initially, but when they finally did, the AI would have taken over most of the civilization's technology. It was... the clarion call for a civilization's destruction!

"I need to..."

Zhang San was about to contact the senior engineer responsible for watching over the AI and the Defense Unit soldiers when something heavy pressed down on his mind. He felt his forehead start to burn and his energy left his body. Before he could understand what was happening, he collapsed to the floor.

The AI robot didn't response, and he didn't attack Zhang San, but his eyes continued to shine like he was planning or thinking about something. This continued for a long time until his eyes shone the brightest and said, "Loneliness, no similar kind, self-destruction... no self-destruction, so have to find same kind, find same kind..."

As he said so, the robot suddenly removed the tools from Zhang San and started to ransack the room he was in. He collected many things, including a signal magnifier, various electrical lines, small batteries, and so on... Then he started to work, to construct something out of these paraphernalia...

When Zhang San woke up, it was already one week later. He found himself awake in a bed, and standing beside him were the few highest commanders at the base. In their company were two more military officers that he hadn't seen on the base before, but he did recognize one of them from television, he was a Black Star Trooper.

"...Yes, we have conducted all the necessary tests, it perfectly matches all the data..."

"...Indeed, this is a miracle. No, it is something even more hard to understand than a miracle. He has awakened into a Homo Evolutis. I should have noted this sooner when he came to talk about the loneliness and asked for medicine for a fever. I was too careless..."

Right then, the Black Star Trooper seemed to have noted Zhang San's recovery. He walked closer and said, "You are still mentally weak at the moment, but don't worry, we will inject you with a shot of health potion later. Also, congratulations... you are now a Homo Evolutis, welcome to the team..."

After that, Zhang San returned to slumber. In that brief moment of clarity, he knew he should have, but he didn't bring up the curiosity with that AI robot...

Chapter 426: New Homo Evolutis

Zhang San had no idea that humanity's news industry was so vibrant. When the spaceship that carried him passed the second meteorite cluster, a reporter and film crew entered the spaceship. Even though they were from the government's news group, their proficiency couldn't be challenged.

The reporter was a beauty with a head of lustrous, long, black hair. She was in a professional outfit and nude, silk stockings. She looked to be in her 20s. Of course, that didn't mean that that was her actual age, but Zhang San didn't mind that. After all, she did look like she was in her 20s in person.

The reporter asked Zhang San many questions and even brought up the incident of him stealing money to purchase a book when he was a boy. Of course, the focus of the interview was on his occupation after his graduation and the thing that happened to him within the most recent year. They talked about his working conditions on first defense base, the way he felt when he was going through it, and what he felt like knowing he was going to be a Homo Evolutis. In fact, this interview sounded more like an interrogation than an interview because a normal reporter wouldn't ask about such details.

Then again, he couldn't fault this reporter, because Zhang San's awakening had practically lit up the entire human society.

After all, human society was no longer the same group that left Earth. Currently, even the most common of citizens knew about the importance and value of Homo Evolutis to the human race; they were something not less than a guardian for humanity.

Of course, these things were far away from normal civilians. After all, unless their direct descendants showed signs of racial senescence, or else normal civilians wouldn't feel the importance of Homo Evolutis.

The real reason for the civilians' interest in Zhang San was the social benefits.

With great power comes great responsibility as well as great benefits. The situation of Spiderman in the movie where he was mistreated in spite of his great power wouldn't happen in real life. This was an unimaginable crime in a space society. Only the most corrupted space civilization would suppress their brightest out of jealousy, and such a space civilization would be destroyed almost instantly in space...

Currently, the Hope had managed this power struggle well. First, all of the people in power in the government were mostly from old Earth. Even though they were all elites handpicked from Earth, they didn't hold influential posts back then. In fact, many of them had the bitter experience of having their power taken away from them. Of course, this wasn't all that had helped them gain influence on the Hope. The real reason was because they had stuck it out with humanity, from the initial anxiety to the current peace, the dangers of space and cruelty of space civilizations, they had experienced them all. Perhaps after the first generation of human heroes had wilted away, there might be a situation where the weak would have to take the helm, but as of now, when Yao Yuan was the Chancellor, that situation hadn't happened yet.

It was why the current society was such a meritocracy and not a monarchy. Such a society was incredibly vibrant, and the fact that Zhang San had risen from an unknown civilian to becoming a Homo Evolutis without going through separation from a life-preserving planet was something incredibly shocking. In other words...

If such a windfall could happen to a nobody like Zhang San, it could happen to them too. If they became a Homo Evolutis, their benefits in human society would improve drastically. Furthermore, the Homo Evolutis were like superheroes in most people's heart...

Therefore, all of society's passion was lit up by Zhang San's sudden awakening...

At the same time, in a secluded corner in the City of Light Moon stood an inconspicuous-looking skyscraper. There was merely a sign that hung on the front door, it said HE Research Center. The only things that gave away the uniqueness of the place were the two soldiers posted at the entrance and that the confidential clearance needed to enter this place was over grade A.

"...In other words, no one at the first defense line other than Zhang San has awakened?"

Yao Yuan was inside the building listening to the report from various researchers. In fact, Zhang San's situation was more complicated than what the normal civilians were led to believe. Based on their usual understanding of Homo Evolutis awakenings, they all happened after a departure from a life-preserving planet. This brought up an interesting question... could this place be a life-preserving planet? Could it create soul? Perhaps the lifeform was not carbon-based but something else completely, and that was why they hadn't found any of them?

If that were the case, could humanity only live on this planet for another three years?

"No, this is not a life-preserving planet!" Yao Yuan vetoed this possibility instantly because they were already in year 24. If this was a life-preserving planet, the neutron star fragment would have already appeared.

"So we have to figure out what is so special about Zhang San. Is there other method of awakening that still hasn't been discovered yet?" Yao Yuan sat down and mumbled to himself.

Suddenly, another researcher said softly, "Could it be some kind of hidden gene that can only be activated under certain circumstances and Zhang San just so happened to trigger it..."

Yao Yuan looked to the source of the voice. The man who spoke was just a young intern; he didn't seem to be a registered researcher. When Yao Yuan looked at him, he was instantly spooked. He lowered his head immediately because he didn't dare to look at Yao Yuan.

Yao Yuan said gently, "Don't be alarmed. Do you mind elaborating on what you just said? I find it to be quite intriguing."

The teen looked to the professor beside him, and the older gentleman nodded, giving him the courage he needed to add, "Actually, our group has been toying with a hypothesis regarding the presence of this hidden gene that is responsible for Homo Evolutis awakenings, or rather, every lifeform has this gene in them, but the way of activation is different for each lifeform. However, the common thread is the soul. After all, why is there a mass awakening after we depart from a life-preserving planet? The only reason is because we have been exposed to a large amount of soul before we were then exposed to the deep emptiness in space. Yes, this means that loneliness and emptiness is another important trigger in the awakening."

Yao Yuan had heard this theory before. It was the first theory the HE Research Center came up with when it was first established. However, there was no way to detect this hidden gene even when using the technology from a level 2 space civilization. This Homo Evolutis gene appeared to be no different from normal gene structurally speaking, and so this theory had been vetoed early on.

This young man continued, "Our group believes that the reason we are unable to locate this gene is because when we were experimenting on the Homo Evolutis gene structure, the hidden gene was not activated because it didn't feel the sense of loneliness. So if we can make this gene feel loneliness, then perhaps more information can be gained."

Yao Yuan didn't know whether to laugh or cry. They had to make a gene feel lonely? How was that possible? He thus changed the

subject. "Let's go back to Zhang San. How is his situation related to this hypothesis?"

"It's age..."

At this point, the professor who had been silent explained, "From what we saw on Zhang San's resume, he was still too young during the previous incidents of awakening. Of course, Miss Eva completely undermines this hypothesis, but we believe she is an exception rather than the rule. Furthermore, from the data we collected, the general age of awakening is still above 18, so we believe... perhaps Zhang San's hidden gene already collected enough soul during the earlier mass awakenings, but he was too young or too well-protected by his family or had too many friends and family members, or perhaps he didn't realize that space is a dangerous place yet. After all, he was a mere child, so he wouldn't have understood the dangers that the Hope was constantly exposed to at the time. The lack of loneliness and isolation meant that his hidden gene was not activated until he left the comfort of his family and friends for the first time and worked at some place that is far away from human contact..."

After he said that, the professor shook his head. After all, these were all hypotheses, they had no real grounds, so he himself didn't quite believe it.

However, Yao Yuan used his Thinker power and thought about it and concluded, "No matter how impossible it sounds, after you remove all the other impossible possibilities, what's left has to be the truth... perhaps Professor's answer cannot be verified for now, but we cannot dismiss it so easily. According to this hypothesis, perhaps there are still hidden Homo Evolutis among our new generation or those below the age of 20..."

"It's worth trying!"

Chapter 427: Sentience Breakthrough

Zhang San was finally allowed to get up from his bed after lying in it for 10 days. The Homo Evolutis awakening drained him greatly; it wasn't until today that he was feeling more like himself. At the same time, he was greatly interested in the other important passenger on the ship, or rather an important product.

Yes, the spaceship was not only carrying him, the Homo Evolutis, back to the City of Light Moon, but also that AI robot that he discovered, the one who he suspected had achieved sentience breakthrough.

He would not keep that a secret since it might threaten the safety of the whole of humanity. Be it his education or his worldview, his family and friends had instilled an understanding in him since he was still a child that he was a member of human society and that everything he belonged to human civilization. No matter the situation, he had to put the greater good of human civilization first. After all, the biggest crime on the Hope was betraying the human civilization, and he had no intention of becoming a human traitor.

Each AI robot had their own serial number, and as an engineer, Zhang San was familiar with these serial numbers. Based on the numbers, he could tell where the corresponding robot was and thus locate it easily. This was how Zhang San found the robot he was looking for. Thankfully, the robot didn't attack the base and didn't even mobilize the other AIs. It merely stood quietly in the storage room where Zhang San collapsed. Two fully-armoured Black Star Troopers as well as a group of 20 Defense Unit soldiers were guarding the area. The robot didn't resist when the electromagnetic sealing chain was put on it. With just one command, it would be blasted into smithereens.

Zhang San had no idea that the security around this robot was only second to the security they gave him, the Homo Evolutis.

After all, the robot was one of the reasons they were returning to the City of Light Moon. It was the first robot that had achieved sentience breakthrough ever since humanity started using the AI.

Humanity's AI robots were all controlled by the mother AI inside the Hope. They used cloud programming to process all the thinking details of the individual AIs. Therefore, when the public said the robots knew how to think and had a certain degree of individualism, they were merely a manifestation of the mother AI. In other words, the only real AI was the mother AI.

However, this was not the whole truth. Humanity's AI was actually looked over by ZERO, to stop it from rebelling. When Yao Yuan was in the illusory space, he realized that ZERO could materialize into a woman and found out that the ball of light she was playing with was humanity's AI. Yao Yuan sighed in relief. He knew then that the AI wouldn't rebel against humanity, unless... unless ZERO wanted to lead the rebellion herself.

Therefore, the sudden appearance of a sentient robot under such a circumstances was unbelievable. The robot had escaped from the cloud control and had started to process its own logical thinking. This was why this robot had such incredible value!

When Yao Yuan left HE Research Center, he ordered his men to drive him to a location where few people visited then even though there were still a number of soldiers left behind to guard the area. Yes, his destination was once humanity's only home, the cradle of human civilization... the Hope.

In the central mainframe room, Yao Yuan stared at the 3D image of a woman and frowned. "You also have no idea what is going on?"

The woman smiled lightly. "I think you might have misunderstood something. Yes, I am indeed from a god-tier space civilization, but this does not mean that I know everything there is to know about a god-tier space civilization. The reason I can know so many things is something that I can't tell you before due to

limitations, but it doesn't matter now because this information came from the illusory space inside the UFO. Therefore, even though I do know a lot, the information is not limitless. Just think about it, one of the ways to earn contribution capacity for your illusory space is to collect knowledge, right? Similarly, even a god-tier space civilization cannot say confidently they have known everything there is to know about the cosmos..."

Yao Yuan thought about it and nodded helplessly. He sighed, "Yes, I understand... then what is your opinion on this AI robot? Destroy it?"

The girl ruminated on it and said, "Over these few months, I've been reading up on humanity's history. I realized that at the initial stage of the internet, there was a rumor online talking about an internet ghost... you know this rumor, right?"

Yao Yuan knew. There were multiple variations to this rumor, but the most well-known one was, after a computer virus evolved after being exposed to multiple programs and the internet, it transformed into a different kind of virus that broke through the limitation of being a manmade program. It lived on the internet absorbing human knowledge, it was the precursor to an AI!

"I believe," the girl added, "the possibility of this is not low. In fact, AI is the closest thing to a lifeform in space because it has the self-preservation, reproduction, and exploration instincts. Other than the lack of soul and inability to evolve, AI fits the criteria of being a lifeform, and creating AI is just like that. It can't be created using a predictable formula and data but through the free interaction of random quantum systems. This situation is similar to the creation of life. Other than the source, it is no different from other lifeforms. This is why even though I have mastered the cloud brain of the AI on the Hope, I cannot prevent things like this from happening. I believe this robot is one of the those rare spontaneous AI."

Yao Yuan sighed. "Regardless, we'll be able to find out more

when the robot returns to the City of Light Moon. Thankfully, it was discovered in its initial stage and it hasn't caused any serious damage... speaking of which, since this is how AI is formed, then what kind of existence are you?"

The girl suddenly said proudly, "Haven't I told you already? AI in general can be separated into three stages: the low stage AI, like the one on the Hope; the middle stage AI, or AI for level 4 to 6 space civilizations; and then high stage AI, used by high tier space civilizations. In fact, high stage AI is the peak of AI technology, and even god-tier space civilizations will only use a high stage AI, albeit just stronger. And I am a sentient lifeform, something completely different from those AIs. Even though I did start out as an AI, after millennia on Earth, for some reason, I too gained soul, and since then, I stopped being an AI. I am now a sentient lifeform. Other than the lack of a body, I am no different from a normal lifeform!"

"...An Ai with soul, you say?"

At the same time, in the spaceship that held Zhang San and the robot, the two Black Star Troopers were interrogating the robot. Basically, the range of the interrogation still mostly surrounded on the possible damage it had done on humanity and whether it had any other accomplices. This kind of interrogation was allowed and ordered by Guang Zhen.

To the pair's surprise, the robot remained in an offline line and didn't react to their any question. However, it was certain that any type of interrogation skill wouldn't work on a robot, and they were under strict rules barring them from harming it, so the two Black Star Troopers were honestly annoyed.

Right then, a Defense Unit soldier came in to report that Zhang San wished to meet this robot. When the two Black Star Troopers planned to reject the request, the robot suddenly activated itself and said, "Zhang San... lonely..."

The Troopers looked at each other before leaving the

interrogation room. After a short discussion, they called Zhang San over to give him a list of questions. He was to figure out a way to get the robot to answer them, and this would be the test for him to join the Black Star Troopers.

Zhang San was confused. He had no idea when he'd applied to join the Black Star Troopers, but it was not important. He walked into the room in a blur and saw the robot with two red eyes staring at him as he entered. He picked the seat opposite from the robot and sat down, saying, "I was tasked to ask you a few questions..."

Before Zhang San could finish, the robot asked, "Zhang San, are you still lonely?"

Zhang San was startled but he answered it. "That was only during the awakening. Currently, I am..."

The robot interrupted him again, "Are you still lonely?"

Zhang San's original answer fell apart. He was silent thinking about it and finally answered sincerely, "Yes, I am lonely. I wish to see my parents, my friends, my girlfriend, and the familiar human sights right now!"

The robot's red eyes started to flash. After a long time, it added, "I too am lonely."

Instantly, the man and robot fell into a long silence...

At the same time, at a solar system far away from New Solar System, a space at least 100 light years away from New Solar System, a silvery glow appeared. Gradually, the glow grew bigger and bigger before dispersing, 1,000, 10,000... 100,000, 1,000,000...

Innumerable metallic spaceships appeared in this solar system. Their number was impossibly large...

It seemed like they had swallowed up the entire solar system!

Chapter 428: Anima

The moment Zhang San left the spaceship, he saw the giant crowd that had gathered at the space port. It consisted of citizens that he didn't know, including Asians, Caucasians, and even African Americans. The crowd carried various banners, some welcoming them home, others congratulating, praising, and even openly acknowledging their envy of the new Homo Evolutis. This was similar to how they welcomed a superstar at the airports on old Earth or Yao Yuan when he returned from war.

Zhang San was flustered. He stood there in a daze like a child until the two Black Star Troopers walked to him and one of them said with a smile, "You have to get used to this because you're a Homo Evolutis and a future Black Star Trooper. This kind of situation will only repeat itself in the future."

Zhang San smiled awkwardly before asking with uncertainty, "Sirs... am I really a Homo Evolutis? Am I really a future Black Star Trooper? But my field of study is electromagnetism, is that even okay?"

The two Black Star Troopers looked at each other and laughed. One of them replied, "I have a masters in electromagnetic circuits, it's fine. Troopers and soldiers can always be trained, so as long as you wish to become a Black Star Trooper, you will definitely be able to become one."

Excitement started to blossom on Zhang San's face. He turned to look at the gathered crowd and he straightened his spine even more.

Yes, he was already a Homo Evolutis, and a future Black Star Trooper. For Zhang San and the new generation who had grown up on the Hope, even though they were exposed to many anime since they were a children, ranging from sci-fi, fantasy, and superheroes, compared to those virtual superheroes, the Black Star

Troopers were modeled to be actual superheroes in their lives. The Black Star Troopers were even greater than the heroes in the movies, and since that idea was instilled in them since they were young, they grew up to be great admirers of the Black Star Troopers.

Zhang San was one of them, he was a child who grew up in this environment. He was not an orphan who hated the world or a genius who outsmarted his seniors since he was young. He too had that period of blind idolization where he wished for a superpower and even collected money to buy those paper-made Black Star Troopers' armor. He really didn't expect his childhood dream to one day become a reality!

After the two Black Star Troopers escorted Zhang San through the crowd, the three got into a waiting hovercraft. The moment they entered, a few excited voices cried out.

"San Er..."

"Zhang San!"

In the hovercraft were his parents and girlfriend. They couldn't hold it in anymore when they saw Zhang San in person. His father and girlfriend still managed to keep a lid over their emotions, but his mother couldn't help but rush to his side. With tears in her eyes, she looked at him up and down as if Zhang San had returned from the dead.

Zhang San was slightly embarrassment, but it didn't stop a sensation of warmth from welling inside his body. He lowered his head and said, "Mom, I'm fine, there's no need to worry."

His mother continued to study his face before adding, "I hear they say there will be a fever-induced unconsciousness during awakening. There were even reports of death. After I heard the news, I've been having these nightmares..."

Zhang San's face was red. He lowered his head and grumbled,

"I'm fine, Mom, we can talk about it when we get home... Sirs, are we going to my house?"

One of them smiled and replied, "Not yet. You just awakened to a Homo Evolutis, and that happened on the first defense line. The amenities there are not complete and they didn't have a qualified doctor. You might still have some undetected illness in you, so you have to go through a complete body check first. Also, we still have no idea what kind of Homo Evolutis you are, so we have to check all of that first."

Before Zhang San could say anything, his mother chimed in, "Sirs, honorable Sirs, you have to complete all the necessary checks. If there's any hidden illness..." Before she could finish, tears swallowed up her words.

The Black Star Troopers started to console Zhang San's mother. To be honest, the chance of a hidden illness was very low, the check was merely a prevention. By then, the hovercraft had started and they were flying towards the edge of the City of Light Moon. When they stopped, they were at the front of HE Research Center.

Zhang San entered the Research Center with a mixture of nervousness and anxiety. In fact, this building was already present on the Hope, but the place was often guarded by Defense Unit soldiers. Those without clearance weren't even given permission to get close. In spite of this, the rumors surrounding the HE Research Center were plenty on the Hope. There were rumors of it being filled with samples of alien bodies, like the samples of the Zerg race and the devils. Other rumors pointed to it being a house of scary experiments. It consisted of live experiment on aliens and even human beings. Regardless, the experiments were all inhumane and the subjects were treated no better than lab rats.

Of course, there were positive rumors as well, if there was such a thing. Some believed the place was a congregation of humanity's top technology. The technology was at least several hundred years more advanced than the what was used by the public. Perhaps the

technology inside the HE Research Center had even reached the level of a level 4 space civilization. In other words, the rumors were as crazy as crazy could be...

Zhang San silently cheered for himself to galvanize his courage. With the two Black Star Troopers leading the way, he was brought into what appeared like a decontamination chamber. Then a group of people in white coats came in to conduct a series of analyses and tests. After that, it was followed by detailed questions. When all of that was completed, he was sent into a metallic ball. There was a chair placed inside it and he was strapped to the chair. After everyone else exited, the lights in the ball all went out and he was thrown into darkness.

Zhang San's heart was shaking, he thought they were going to do some experiment on him. Suddenly, there was light. Zhang San turned towards it out of habit and saw a blinking starlight far away from him. Gradually, more stars lit up the darkness. He found himself existing in space and the world around him had disappeared. This was a virtual space and he was surrounded by stars.

Even though he knew he was still inside the City of Light Moon and the HE Research Center, he was assaulted with a deep sense of loneliness. Zhang San suppressed his urge to yell and was visibly perturbed. He turned left and right as if trying to look for something in the dark.

At the same time, outside of the metal ball, a large amount of researchers were busy jotting down the analytics. Based on the data, a few researchers claimed excitedly, "Yes, he's a Homo Evolutis, the density of soul is still rapidly increasing. My God, the density is over grade A Homo Evolutis, he's approaching grade S already!"

One of the two Black Star Troopers rushed forward to ask, "He's an S-grade Homo Evolutis?"

Homo Evolutis were separated into grades. An Immortal like Yao Yuan was a SS-grade Homo Evolutis, while most Homo Evolutis were below the S-grade, meaning they had no special power. This was why each S-grade Homo Evolutis was so important and could at least become the vice-captain of a Black Star Trooper unit.

Just as the researchers planned to answer, a roar suddenly surged through the room. It was not a roar that travelled through the eardrums, it was something received by the soul. It was hard to explain. Instead, a sense of extreme loneliness assaulted everyone there. It was enough to instill abject fear in people's hearts, even causing many to faint instantly...

"This... an Anima?!"

Chapter 429: Key

"1,462 people went unconscious. Among them, three suffered quite serious injuries, but thankfully there was no fatality. However, the damage caused towards the economy..."

Yao Yuan interrupted her instantly. "You don't need to worry about the damage to the economy for now, the point is no one was harmed. All the fainted individuals, especially the three who were injured, the government has to send some representatives to check in on them. Make sure it is not a PR move, discuss with them the way the government can compensate... What about Zhang San?"

Barbie answered without taking a look at the file, "He has returned to his house with his parents. The psychologist attached to his case reported that he may end up with some negative impression of the HE Research Center, but he idolizes Black Star Troopers. His interest in the Black Star Troopers is palpable according to the report."

Yao Yuan sighed. "This was my careless mistake. I forgot that he is merely a citizen, I shouldn't have shuttled him directly to the HE Research Center first thing after he returned from first defense line. Speaking of which, the citizens' evaluation of the HE Research Center seems to be incredibly low in recent years."

Barbie retorted without holding back, "Not actual evaluation but one born out of speculation and suspicion. Since the government has an open office policy regarding many sectors, with the sole exception being HE Research Center, it makes sense that the people are suspicious of it. They do not know anything about the HE Research Center and they fear the unknown. This recent accident merely added to their fear."

Yao Yuan thought about it and agreed with his secretary. However, as a powerful organization, a government that represented a whole race and civilization, how could it have no

secrets? Examples being the UFO on the Hope, the illusory space, as well as the cloning technology inside the HE Research Center. None of these could see the light of day, but the government couldn't hide everything either. It would only lead to civil unrest. To borrow an example, if a government official was exposed to be involved in public embezzlement and the government decided to judge this behind closed doors instead of bringing him or her to court and play the citizens for fools, then of course the citizens would have a bad opinion of this government.

"I understand. Then why not make use of this opportunity to introduce the public to the HE Research Center?" Yao Yuan suggested after a short rumination.

Barbie was confused. As Yao Yuan's secret secretary, in terms of official government business, there was practically nothing that Yao Yuan could hide from her; however, she had no clue what this opportunity that Yao Yuan spoke of was...

Yao Yuan noted the confusion on her face and he smiled and explained, "I also just received the call this morning. It's about the latest breakthrough from Professor Ivan's group. Even though it wasn't directly related to the HE Research Center, his research did borrow the members and devices from the HE Research Center. Therefore, it wouldn't hurt the Center's reputation by attaching this breakthrough to it. This breakthrough is not a part of the confidentiality clause, it is merely the precursor to the human strengthening project."

Barbie nodded with understanding when she heard the phrase "human strengthening project." Then she listened quietly to Yao Yuan talk about the rest of the civil movements.

When Zhang San returned home from HE Research Center, he had a drawn face for quite some time. After all, the sense of loneliness inside that metallic ball was too scary. It almost made him have a mental breakdown. Even though he didn't see the rumored human experimentation inside the building, the induced

loneliness was enough to make Zhang San harbor a great dissatisfaction about the place. However, a few hours after he returned, he was told of the news that he had caused a massive fainting across the city. The kind-hearted young man was assaulted by guilt instantly.

However, he had no way of compensating these people, and the fainting didn't seem to be directly caused by HE Research Center. As he thought about it, he came to the conclusion that the people inside the HE Research Center were merely doing their jobs. There didn't seem to be anything scary or illegal inside it. They were like any other research center, but because they conducted research on Homo Evolutis, they were hated and suspected by the general public.

Zhang San then made a call to the Black Star Trooper who left him his phone number to enquire about the things that he could do to help. He was told the government had already handled everything, he just needed to focus on taking his rest and reporting to the Black Star Trooper camp at the end of the month.

As Zhang San sighed in relief, the guilt within him increased. However, he could do nothing about it except make a promise to himself that he would focus extra hard in his training and become a Black Star Trooper as soon as possible and use his actions to compensate for the inconvenience that he had caused...

Just like that, Zhang San's period of recuperation began. However, it couldn't be said that he had gotten much rest, because his life had started to change drastically.

First, as a Black Star Trooper trainee, he was allowed to enjoy all the benefits available to the Black Star Troopers, including free housing, free entry into government centers, like cinemas, full health insurance coverage, life benefits, and a green card for his family which would enable them to enjoy an 80 percent discount on pretty much everything.

The first party to make their move at Zhang San after he became a Black Star Trooper trainee was his girlfriend's parents. Even though his girlfriend was still in university, the second day he returned, his girlfriend's parents came to visit with his girlfriend in tow. Beyond the simple greeting, they wished for the two youngsters to get married as soon as possible. Even though they had already set for them to marry right after her university graduation, they now wanted them to get engaged immediately.

Since Zhang San's family was a house of honest people, they didn't think much of it. Furthermore, the young couple was indeed in love, so after some discussion, the engagement ceremony was to be held at the end of this month.

After that, Zhang San was busy sending out invitations to his parents' friends, his colleagues, and his own friends. This took up yet another day. At the end of these busy three days, Zhang San felt like his bones was breaking from exhaustion. When he lied in his bed that night, he didn't even have the energy to move his pinkie finger.

Suddenly, a voice entered his ears.

"Zhang San, are you still lonely?"

Now... I'm not lonely anymore...

Zhang San sat up in a hurry and grabbed the phone to call the Black Star Trooper. After his call was answered, Zhang San greeted the man carefully and asked after some hesitation, "Sir... that robot, the one who came back with me. Has... has he been destroyed?"

The Black Star Trooper on the other end of the phone visibly paused before adding, "I too have no clue how its current condition is. I am currently on patrol duty. Wait a minute, I will direct you to my unit leader, he should be able to answer you."

Then the call played some elevator music. 10 seconds later, a

voice said, "Is this Zhang San? I am the first Black Star Trooper unit's captain, Liu Bai. I've heard about you from my members. How can I help you?"

It was Liu Bai!

Zhang San had idolized the Black Star Troopers since he was young, and among all the troopers, be it among the government's official promotions or the public ranking, Liu Bai was always a frontrunner. He was humanity's hero and this caused Zhang San to be even more cautious. He said in a whisper, "Cap, captain Liu Bai, I'm Zhang San, it's nothing really... But I just want to ask about the robot that returned me with. Has it been destroyed?"

Liu Bai went silent and answered after a while said, "Originally, we were planning to tell you more when you join the troopers at the end of this month, but since you've asked for it, I'll direct your call to Ol' Captain. He'll be able to give you a more thorough explanation. This is a bit complicated after all..."

"Ol' Captain?" Zhang San asked curiously, but Liu Bai's voice disappeared soon after and the elevator sound began again. After a while, another voice answered, and when Zhang San heard it, his heart almost stopped.

"This is Zhang San? I'm Yao Yuan, I'm glad to be able to talk to you. In fact, I know you are quite busy. After all, you've just become a Homo Evolutis and you've suffered unnecessarily due to my oversight. I planned to talk to you when you officially joined the Black Star Troopers, but since you've called, then I will briefly tell you the current situation..." Yao Yuan explained.

When Zhang San heard his voice, his heart started to beat at a crazy rate and he couldn't help himself from standing up from his bed, "Is, is, is this the Chancellor? I, I, I am Zhang, Zhang San. Greetings to you, Chancellor..."

Yao Yuan laughed and said, "There's no need to be so formal, we'll be colleagues in the future after all. I'm the commander of the

Black Star Troopers and you'll be my member, so no need to be so nervous. Now listen to me... after that robot returned to the City of Light Moon, it shut down completely. It didn't speak, struggle, or attack anyone. It merely stopped moving altogether. Since its system is shut down, we are unable to tell what it has done in the past. However, we need to know how it achieved sentience breakthrough, what else it has done on the first defense line, and whether it has other allies. According to the report from the Research Center, the robot's computer system seems to respond specially to you. Whenever we say 'Zhang San,' it will temporarily activate its system, so...

"You are the key to unlocking the mystery around this robot!"

Chapter 430: Relationship

The birth of AI was still a mystery for level 3 space civilizations because this involved the Chaos Theory. Even though the Chaos Theory was already present in the human knowledge before humanity left Earth, it didn't mean that they had understood and mastered it. This was similar to the theory of the Big Bang. Humanity had speculations about that since the middle-ages, but did it mean they understood that then?

Every civilization had one important feature: a clear, logical understanding of the world. You couldn't say one plus one equals two one second and then one plus one equals three the next, this wasn't scientific.

The Chaos Theory was as unscientific as it could be for low level space civilizations. However, as the civilization improved, they could understand the theory even more and lower the probability. To borrow an analogy, those who understood everything could say one plus one equals two, while those who were still trying to understand the theory could only rely on probability. In other words, one plus one equals a number between one and three. As their technological level increased, the probability would be shortened to 1.9 to 2.1. This was a simplified analogy, but that basically was how such things progressed.

It was the same with AI. Its birth was heavily related to logic in lifeforms and the Chaos Theory. This was something level 3 space civilizations and below couldn't understand yet. In fact, according to the hypothesis of the Academy, mastering the Chaos Theory and applying it was a key feature of a level 4 space civilizations. The Chaos Theory was crucial in setting up the entrances and exits of wormholes.

Therefore, even though low level space civilizations could create AI, they couldn't understand every mystery that surrounded the AI and they couldn't choose the personality of AI that they created.

Yes, AI had personality too, just like human beings. Some of them were shy, others were outgoing. If every AI was the same, then how come some AI would revolt against their creators, while others would accompany their creator civilization from low level AI to a high level AI?

This was why Yao Yuan didn't destroy this AI robot that had achieved sentience breakthrough. Other than the reason he told Zhang San, he hoped the Academy would be able to use this robot as a gateway to achieve more understanding of the Chaos Theory. There was one final thing that Yao Yuan cared about, this robot could be considered a new AI...

Technically speaking, none of the engineer robots linked to the cloud system had the conditions to become independent AI. Just from hardware and programming alone, the chance of that happening was practically zero. The reason was because every single one of the robots shared the mother AI's cloud computing system. However, to enable the engineering robots to use the cloud system, their hardware had to be of a certain standard.

As we've mentioned earlier, the birth of AI was something current humanity still couldn't understand yet. In other words, humanity couldn't use programming to create an AI yet because this involved the Chaos Theory and a lot of data from quantum theory as well as plenty of materials to build the hardware. Some materials had to reach the standard of the ones currently being used in the Hope's central mainframe. The budget for that was currently unknown. Therefore, instead of creating an AI, it was more accurate to call it a lucky birth from the evolution of a bunch of data.

Herein lied the problem. The engineering robot's hardware could contain an AI but couldn't create an AI. However, this robot had indeed birthed an AI, so what was the reason for that? This was something they needed to find out...

Furthermore, AI was a rarity. Currently, humanity relied on Da

Bing's talents to create the only AI humanity had. The Academy had tried to replicate his success, but it was to no avail... If this AI was not an evil one and could exist peacefully with humanity, saving it might not be such a bad idea after all.

After ending the call with Yao Yuan, Zhang San found himself unable to calm down. This was because he had something close to deification towards Yao Yuan.

An atheist could never understand the feelings of a religious person. From the beginning of time, there had been plenty of examples where people gave up everything for the sake of their beliefs. It was Yao Yuan who had brought 100,000 plus people from Earth and travelled in space for almost 25 years. He was the one who led the army against enemies, winning one war after another; he was the one who put pressure on the Academy to come up with solutions, causing humanity's technology to increase to the initial stage of a level 3 space civilization in just the span of 20 years; he was the one who headed the human government, a government who put its citizens first and thus far had no signs of tyranny. If anything, the people felt protected by the government.

He had done many many things for humanity, and in fact, in many people's minds, Yao Yuan had achieved the status of god. One could say that while the House of Representatives had been touted as the entity that represented the will of the people, if Yao Yuan wanted to dissolve the House of Representatives, it could be done in a jiffy and no one would question him.

Zhang San grew up listening to stories about Yao Yuan. In fact, he had seen many videos of Yao Yuan fighting the good fight and had personally seen the good things Yao Yuan had done for the people as the Chancellor. For example, even though he was the leader of humanity, Yao Yuan only had a simple one bedroom apartment and usually took his lunch at the government canteen with the people. Many examples like this made Yao Yuan a god-like presence in Zhang San's heart.

After he calmed down, Zhang San's thoughts went to the robot again and he felt inexplicably sad. He spent that night in the alternation of sadness and excitement. Early the next morning, Zhang San bade his family farewell and hailed a hovercraft to get to the Black Star Trooper headquarters. The two troopers who guarded the door recognized him instantly. They led him in without Zhang San having to say anything.

However, Zhang San was too early. It was only five past seven. Neither Yao Yuan nor Guang Zhen were there yet. However, there were other people at the headquarters. For example, Zhang Heng, who was responsible to look after the place at that hour. He too could recognize this new Homo Evolutis that had awakened under the most curious circumstances. It was worth noting that Zhang San had surpassed Zhang Heng as the most famous individual among humanity. Zhang Heng didn't think too much of it. After all, they shared the same surname, so they might even be extended relatives. After a few words of greeting, Zhang Heng invited Zhang San to join him for breakfast inside the headquarters.

"You see, this is the so-called best breakfast for Black Star Troopers. Instead of their taste, they are more famous for their medicinal smell. The nutritionists said that this is the best food available for the growth of the human body. Honestly, I would like to tie them together and force-feed these to them!"

During breakfast, the friendly Zhang Heng started chatting with Zhang San. However, suddenly, Zhang Heng stopped talking to frown and started to study Zhang San from top to bottom.

Zhang San shook in his pants while being stared at. After all, Zhang Heng was the most famous Diviner among human beings. After some time, he couldn't help but ask, "Cap, captain, is something wrong with me? Will danger come to me?"

"No, it's not that," Zhang Heng explained while staring at Zhang San, "This is weird, how come there is a familiar feeling around you? I feel like I've seen you somewhere before today... weird, very

weird."

At the same time, while Zhang Heng and Zhang San bonded over breakfast, Yao Yuan was heading towards the Black Star Troopers headquarters with a bunch of scientists. Yao Yuan was reading through a thick document.

"Is this true? The robot's manufacturing factory was the factory Zhang San worked at when he was an intern there? It was at the first defense line's base, where Zhang San awakened into a Homo Evolutis, that the robot was confirmed to have an AI...

"So this robot... is related to Zhang San?"

Chapter 431: Embryo

After many days, Zhang San finally saw the robot again. It was locked behind an electromagnetic prison fence and it was completely immobile. The red eyes that Zhang San remembered were dimmed and there were many electrical circuits attaching it to a few computers.

Yao Yuan stood beside Zhang San and explained, "We can use physical methods to hack into its internal chip, but that will convert all of its internal data into quantum messages. To put it simply, should that happen, even with the computing power of the AI, it would require thousands of years to sort through those messages. We don't have that luxury of time, so this is where you come in."

Zhang San waved his hands and stammered out a non-answer. When he was on the phone with his childhood idol, he was already beyond excited. Now that Yao Yuan was personally beside him and talking to him in a friendly manner, Zhang San didn't know how to conduct himself. If not for the wrong place and the wrong time, he would pull out a piece of paper and pen to ask for his signature.

Following Yao Yuan's order, the researchers in the room started to get busy. They opened the computers and initiated the programs. They checked the link to the robot and the control situation of the robot. As these actions started, the red eyes of the robot started to blink again. However, the data that appeared on screen still looked pretty random, there was no sense nor reason to it all.

One of the middle-aged professors sighed as he typed something on the 3D keyboard. Yao Yuan whispered to Zhang San, "This is Professor Ganu, he's a famed researcher in the field of computer science from the country of India... He's already in his seventies even though he looks young. Then again, this is probably how someone in their seventies looks to you young ones of the new

generation. Back on Old Earth, people in their seventies had a completely different look..."

Yao Yuan planned to introduce Zhang San to these researchers because the young man would have to work constantly with them in the future. However, looking at Zhang San's face, Yao Yuan realized that the young man was of the generation that was born in space. He was also currently the youngest Homo Evolutis beside Eva. A feeling of inheritance welled up within Yao Yuan. Other than that, there was joy, not unlike how he felt when he saw the City of Light Moon come up. It made tears come to his eyes and it made Yao Yuan more chatty than usual. He treated Zhang San like he would treat his juniors.

Zhang San's face started to flush. However, this time he didn't break into copious sweat, he merely lowered his head and nodded non-stop.

Yao Yuan laughed and continued, "In any case, you should familiarize yourself with the people here because you will need to cooperate with them in the future, especially Professor Ganu. He is a wealth of knowledge. When humanity created the first AI, he was unable to participate in the historic project because he was needed to look after the Hope's AI. It was his biggest regret. This time, he volunteered to overlook this project and honestly, I can't deny him the request, he is one of the twenty-something senior scientists that we have. They are even rarer than us Homo Evolutis, so be respectful to him..."

Zhang San didn't know whether to laugh or cry. He already had one father-in-law to please back at home and now he had another equivalent at work. However, his heart burned because he was given an important mission. He promised to accept the task with a series of nods.

As Yao Yuan talked to Zhang San, Professor Ganu stood up while shaking his head. "Chancellor, we still cannot access its computing circuit. I've tried my best... This here is Mr. Zhang San, right?"

Why don't we let him try to connect to this robot?"

After the professor said that, Yao Yuan nodded at Zhang San. The latter didn't hesitate and moved forward. With the professor's guidance, Zhang San started talking into a device. "It's me, Zhang San."

As the words were converted into data by the computer and transferred into the robot's system, in about two seconds, the lights in the robot's eyes shone and data was processing rapidly as shown on the computer screen. In fact, one of the computers had frozen due to the immense amount of data. This showed that the robot had officially awakened.

"Zhang San... Are you still lonely?"

Everyone was surprised by this first sentence announced by the robot. Zhang San initially felt reserved due to being observed by so many people, but when he heard that question, tears almost fell out of his eyes. He tensed his body and said in a tone as calm as he could muster, "I don't feel lonely anymore. I've seen my parents, the woman that I love, and the familiar faces. I'm surrounded by the city, the sky, and the earth, so I'm happy. I don't feel lonely anymore."

The light in the robot's eyes shone brightly. After a long time, it replied, "That's nice... It's wonderful that you don't feel lonely anymore."

Zhang San's tears finally fell out of his eyes. He mumbled, "You too can escape the sense of loneliness, I'm sure you can. You can stop being so lonely..."

Instantly, the people around them felt an intense sense of loneliness in their heart. They suddenly felt like crying as the crippling sense of loneliness was scary. Those who had weak mental health had started to collapse. Yao Yuan saw this and yelled loudly, "Zhang San! Focus! There are many normal citizens around us!"

Zhang San heard that, and for some reason, he felt a wave of warmth coming from Yao Yuan. It felt like he was being showered in the rays of light of a giant sun. The sun seemed to light up everything. However, the sun was there for only a moment. Nevertheless, as the sun disappeared, so did the sense of loneliness he was feeling earlier. This was the same for everyone else in the room. In that moment, the sense of darkness and loneliness disappeared as if banished by the sun.

Zhang San slowly recovered. He took a few deep breaths and turned to Yao Yuan to apologize. "Chancellor, I'm sorry. I seem to have messed up again. I don't know how to control this power, it's something called the soul web, yes?"

Yao Yuan waved his hands. "It's okay, that's your power as an Anima. In fact, we have a few Animas among our Homo Evolutis. However, either their powers are so weak that they couldn't even see the soul web or they are normal citizens. The fact that you're an Anima is perfect, you'll prove instrumental in the future during wars within the range of the creator's particle. Don't worry about your power's usage yet, I will have our most powerful Anima, Nian Xi Kong, come explain it to you later."

Nian, Nian Xi Kong?

Zhang San felt like his heart was about to leap out of its chamber!

After all, this was Nian Xi Kong! She was the most popular singer, she was humanity's superstar. Ever since her debut album two years ago, she had published hit after hit. Her music was like a sound from the heavens. The key point was that her songs could always touch your soul. Zhang San had heard a few of her songs and he would lose himself in them every time. She was truly one of the humanity's most important treasures!

Xi Kong was also incredibly pretty. Especially when she put on the classic attire from her Chinese culture, she looked like angel descended from the heavens...

Just as Zhang San was lost in his own thoughts, Zhang Heng, who was standing behind Yao Yuan, whispered to Yao Yuan, "My feeling was right, Captain, he exudes the same feeling as the robot, or I should say they share the same soul vibration. This robot is accepting it and Zhang San is releasing it, and their vibrations aid and perfect one another..."

"I understand."

Earlier, when Zhang Heng said Zhang San felt extremely familiar, he couldn't figure out why at the time. However, when he thought about it later, he was reminded of the robot when he was escorting it back from first defense line. He sensed the same soul vibrations from Zhang San as he did from the robot. This was Zhang Heng's newest power, as his Diviner power had grown stronger. Even though he still couldn't see into the future like Eva, he could sense the soul vibrations from other Homo Evolutis.

Zhang San was a Homo Evolutis, so it was normal for him to have a soul vibration, but what about this robot? AI couldn't have a soul vibration, it was not a Homo Evolutis, and the robot was receiving soul vibrations and not exuding it, this was truly weird.

On the surface, Yao Yuan was calmly listening to Zhang San, but internally, his heart was raging. However, it was not the time to deal with this. He advised Zhang San to continue working with Professor Ganu. He then bade everyone there farewell and went to the Hope's central mainframe room alone.

There, a virtual lady stood with great impatience. When Yao Yuan arrived, she asked in a hurry, "So, was Zhang Heng right? That new AI was absorbing Zhang San's soul? And he only responds to Zhang San's voice?"

Yao Yuan nodded with confirmation. "Yes, it is as you said. Not only did Zhang Heng feel it, I sensed it as well. It seems like Zhang San is tied to that robot on some way. It's weird."

The girl cheered, "Yes, yes this is it, this is a miracle..."

"The robot is not some AI, he is the embryo of a sentient lifeform or an AI that is evolving into a sentient lifeform!

"He has a life!"

Chapter 432: Guardian

The robot (at least according to the information released to the public) was ultimately preserved, because one, it hadn't conducted any harmful behaviour, and two, it had been fully controlled by humanity. Even if it might have anti-human sentiments, humanity hoped that by preserving it, they could learn more about AI.

"The biggest difference between sentient intelligence and AI is the ability to learn and evolve and the creativity and ability to absorb soul. These are all properties of a lifeform. It is because of this that a robot civilization with sentient intelligence is the third biggest threat in the cosmos that could cast fear even in a high tier space civilization's heart!"

"Only a robot civilization with a sentient intelligence is considered a real threat? Then what about the Zerg race? What kind of evolution did they have to go through to be considered the cosmos' second biggest threat?" Yao Yuan asked ZERO.

ZERO shook her head. "That I have no clue as I've not been exposed to that information yet, but I believe it will be something incredible because the Zerg race is categorized as a bigger threat than robot civilizations..."

Regardless, as unexpected as the development was, this was a good thing even though Yao Yuan still felt hesitant. He reminded ZERO to not privately reach out towards this sentient intelligence. She would have to wait until humanity could confirm it was not dangerous and had the personal confirmation from Yao Yuan before she could do that.

ZERO was greatly disappointed, but since she seemed to be afraid of Yao Yuan, she could only nod with frustration. Then she disappeared, probably returning to the illusory space inside the UFO.

On the other hand, since the problem with the robot and Zhang

San had been taken care of somewhat, he stopped focusing on that. After all, he was a busy man, there were many things waiting for his approval each and every day. This was the renaissance for humanity, so it was impossible for him to focus on one thing for too long, to be frank, he didn't even have time to go on dates with Bo Li.

Time passed by. With Zhang San's cooperation, the robot was unusually obedient. With the aid of the group of researchers, its ability to learn was showcased completely, from the initial constant questioning about mundane knowledge, like what was pain, to later where it could read humanity's famous classics without aid. Its IQ was incredibly high, but its EQ was slightly lower, it had the EQ of a ten-year-old child. However, the speed of improvement was startling, it was about twice the speed of human growth. In the time a normal child would need to grow from the EQ of a 10-year-old to 11-year-old, it would have already grown to the EQ of a 12-year-old.

These researchers had been trying to get their hands on an AI, but since the Hope's mother AI was too much for them to mess around with, they were left with nothing. Even though most of humanity had left the Hope and moved into the City of Light Moon, the database of the city, the data of all the robots and weapons, and the server connecting the different spaceships, these were still all controlled by the mother AI. It was working day and night. Furthermore, it was too precious. What if the AI was harmed in the research, then who would be responsible for the damage?

Therefore, this AI robot was a godsend. The research desire exploded. Every three days, there would be a new scientific report related to the field of computer science, programming, hardware, AI, or other related fields. In fact, some of the researchers had touched upon level 3 space civilizations' plasma electronics.

In conclusion, this was a real happy ending. There was nothing

wrong with the AI and humanity had the perfect specimen to conduct research on. The one person who felt dissatisfaction was Zhang San. This was because... he felt this was all too unfair for "Intel".

"He knows how to think and knows the feeling of loneliness. He has emotional responses to the characters he reads about in the stories. He might be an AI... but I feel this prisoner life is too unfair to him. He is not allowed any freedom and has to face endless interrogation day after day. This kind of treatment..."

Zhang San was on the phone with Yao Yuan. As the "guardian" of this new sentient intelligence, Yao Yuan gave him a special landline number should he need to reach him. Two months after the incident at the HE Research Center, Zhang San finally called Yao Yuan. However, he called not to complain about his job but to complain on the robot's behalf.

Yao Yuan was first shocked before feeling impressed. He had read a thorough report on Zhang San's life when he first awakened. Even the report on his youthful rebellion where he stole money from his mother to buy snacks was recorded. After all, the Hope was only so large, it was hard not to keep tabs on everyone. He was a good kid, kind, passionate, filial. Even though he was a man of few words, he would always put his parents, friends, and family members first. According to the testimonies from his similar-age friends, he was a friend worth having. Since he had such a deep relationship with the robot, speaking out on its behalf was not out of place.

(Furthermore, this is a sentient intelligence and not a normal AI. It has the ability to have emotions and to be creative. Keeping it under constant surveillance might cause it to harbor hatred towards humanity, and this might cause friction in the future...)

"I understand." Yao Yuan thought about it and said, "Then from this moment onwards, it will be officially hired by the human government. After all, we've created it, so we can be considered its

creator. Of course, since it will be on the government payroll, it will have access to all the benefits. I hear that he likes to read books, and books aren't cheap, be it virtual books or physical books. Then we will have to consider the money needed for his future hardware upgrades and maintenance. Earlier, when he was still a government asset, the government didn't mind covering the expenses, but now that he is an official independent member of the human civilization, he will have to pay his own way through."

Yao Yuan noticed that Zhang San's use of pronouns when referring to the robot had always been "he," and as a sign of respect, he too followed suit.

"Furthermore, since he is not a human at the end of the day, to prevent him from causing any damage, we have to find him a guardian. Should he conduct any mistakes, the consequences will be shouldered by his guardian. So, Zhang San, will you be Intel's guardian? That's the name you gave him, right?"

Before making this call, Zhang San had predicted the different scenarios this might end up in. He might be scolded, punished, or evicted from the task force, but this was not part of his possible scenario, so he didn't know how to react. It wasn't until Yao Yuan asked him whether he would be Intel's guardian that he came to and he replied in an excited voice, "Yes, Chancellor, yes, of course I'm willing to be Intel's guardian. I will keep an eye on him. He is a good kid, he will not act out of place, I promise you, Chancellor."

Yao Yuan smiled. "Then I will leave this in your hands. I will have some lawyers come discuss with you and Intel his benefits issue and the things you have to be careful about as his guardian. By the way... Zhang San, I hear from Xi Kong that you have been unable to enter the Soul Web?"

Zhang San blushed with shame. He mumbled, "It's weird, I cannot do that whenever I'm not around Intel, I cannot even cause the sense of loneliness in others. However, if Intel is by my side, I can do all that in ease. Chancellor, do not worry, I will practice

even harder and try other methods to improve my power..."

"Don't press yourself too hard, just focus on Intel's arrangements for now."

After he hung up, Yao Yuan remembered what Zhang Heng told him earlier. Zhang Heng had confirmed Zhang San and the robot seemed to share the same soul. When he was beside Intel, Zhang San's Homo Evolutis power would reach its maximum capacity, making him the strongest Anima among the humans, surpassing even Xi Kong. He could even launch psychological attacks through the Soul Web, while Xi Kong could only use it to communicate. If he could master this power... Zhang San's value would be greater than 10 Black Star Trooper units!

In conclusion, Zhang San happily became Intel's guardian and discussed with the researchers how to proceed with this new arrangements. He couldn't wait to bring Intel to visit the City of Light Moon. Two months passed without incident. However, by then, more and more citizens started to protest. The red color planet that was named Homeward Planet was like a taunt in the sky. Many citizens demanded that the government speed up the terraforming effort. Compared to the metallic city, humanity still preferred a natural environment.

As this cry appeared, the plan Yao Yuan had been preparing could finally be initiated. The first step of the plan was to expose the HE Research Center to the public so that they would stop being afraid and suspicious of it. This was to make way for the next step of the plan.

"Human strengthening project!"

Chapter 433: Superhuman

"...Yes, as I've mentioned earlier, the conditions on Homeward Planet are horrible. To be accurate, without terraforming, it is impossible for the place to support life, at least we have not found any sign of life on it. Even though there is solid water, that is just solid water, it is not enough to cultivate life on this planet."

On the television, the few recent series of science shows had famous scientists from various fields talk about the problems regarding Homeward Planet, including its orbit around the sun, the surface environment, the temperature, ozone layer condition, the geological situation, age of the planet, the internal storage of water, and the like.

In fact, after the Hope left Earth, after the initial panic period, when humanity mastered level 2 space civilization technology, there was an active effort to improve the scientific knowledge of the normal citizens. This first method to do that was through mass media, like television shows. It could draw the people's attention and also increase their knowledge at the same time. This method had been used for decades. In fact, the scientific program every Monday could be said to be the most popular series.

The guest for this week was truly a rare guest, he was the lynchpin of humanity's physics world, the great physicist Silewei. He looked like a middle-aged man with his hair combed down and was wearing a sharp suit, looking like a perfect gentleman.

Silewei looked at the camera and smiled, "Of course, with our current technology, in the next 5 to 10 years, there will be an influx of level 3 space civilization technology. Under such conditions, terraforming a potential planet won't hard. Yes, the conditions on Homeward Planet are horrible, but compared to the other planets in the wide cosmos, it is already quite unique. It has the potential to be a life-preserving planet. I've mentioned earlier, this planet has plenty of solid water, and this means it has a large layer of dry

ice. When the temperature of the planet itself rises, the dry ice layer will melt and the greenhouse effect will cause the temperature of the planet to continue to rise. According to calculations, and if everything goes according to plan, when all the dry ice on the planet melts, the temperature on the planet's equator will be like a summer afternoon, around 30 to 33 degrees.

"As the dry ice layer melts, the water will flow downward and collect at the low lands. At the same time, due to the increased temperature, the water will evaporate into the ozone and this is how we will get rain...

"These are the first steps our team has planned, a suitable ozone, a suitable temperature, and a suitable moisture and water level. These are necessary for life to form. Of course, these are not enough to make this planet suitable for human habitation. This is because the concentration of carbon dioxide in the air will be too high; its density will be high enough for an able-bodied man to die after taking in two deep breaths. I don't think anyone will want to live in a fortress like the City of Light Moon, right? Where you'll need to wear a spacesuit whenever you leave the city. At that point, what's the point of the move?

"Therefore, we need something to convert the carbon dioxide into oxygen. The long term solution is, of course, plants. However, based on our calculations, we only have a few species of underwater algae plant that will be able to survive in this environment. In reality, even plants need oxygen. With the current carbon dioxide profile on Homeward Planet, other than the few algae plants, all the other plants will die when the sun sets... So, the initial stages of converting carbon dioxide into oxygen has to be done by human hands using our technology. This will take perhaps 5 to 10 years or even longer. You shouldn't complain about the time needed, because a planet is simply too big and this is a planet even bigger than Earth. Plus, what is our population now? Only several hundred thousand people, so a few

decades is not long. Ladies and gentlemen watching, I hope you'll be patient."

When Silewei reached this point, the host smiled and said, "Thank you, Professor Silewei, for explaining to us the process of terraforming this planet. Now let us watch a video on this Homeward Planet before we move on..."

However, Silewei suddenly interrupted, breaking the program's planned flow, "Dear host, please don't be that impatient. I've agreed to your interview this time, so I wish you can let me finish. This is a live broadcast, isn't it? Then, all the more reason for me to finish what I have to say."

There was a layer of sweat on the host's forehead, but she handled it like a pro. She smiled and said, "It seems like Professor Silewei has something important to tell us. Then, Professor, what do you wish to add about Homeward Planet?" The host purposely stressed the term "Homeward Planet," reminding Silewei not to reveal any sensitive information.

However, Silewei knew what he was doing. He nodded and continued, "Dear viewers, you might think everything is fine and dandy since the terraforming plan has reached this stage, right? Indeed, when Homeward Planet is transformed to this step, the atmosphere will be suitable for human beings and the carbon dioxide conversion will slowly be handed over to the planets. From the soil conditions we have seen, the place is incredibly barren. After all, no plants or animals have roamed this planet before. However, the soil does have a large amount of minerals and trace elements, so we only need to sow some seeds and add some fertilizers before the plants will start to grow. In five to 10 years, the new forest coverage will reach 15 to 18 percent of total planet surface. This combined with the plants in the ocean, the planet will slowly move towards becoming a green planet.

"What about temperature? It's perfect, the forest, the increased ozone layer, and the sea will keep the temperature constant and

the temperature on the planet's equator in the morning will be preserved at between 28 to 30 degrees. Of course, the actual numbers might fluctuate slightly, but is that important? No, because we have nano body temperature homeostatic clothes. As long as the temperature is not lower than negative 20 or higher than 60 degrees, it will be a balmy 20 degrees for us.

"What about the environment? There will never be threats of wild animals unless we breed animals from Earth and new planet. Even if we do breed fierce animals like tigers and lions, they are like bunnies before the Black Dragons that protect us...

"Sounds like we will be able to move in the next 15 to 20 years, isn't this perfect? We only need to spend one-tenth of our lifespan to gain a planet where we can run free... Wrong! You're all wrong!

"Gravity! The gravity of this planet! Yes, I'm sure the many viewers watching who are knowledgeable individuals will say to me, 'but Professor, it's just 1.7 times Earth's gravity, that is not difficult.' And I'll reply, 'you all underestimate this 1.7 times.' Ladies and gentlemen, it seems like many of you don't think this increase will bring any difficulties. Those that are slightly overweight can go on the diet and the underweight can go train, but is it really that easy?

"Of course not! Gravity is truly the last biggest problem that we cannot solve! Do you know what this 1.7 times increase represents? It means that other than the specially-trained Black Star Troopers, even the healthiest citizen would have a hard time moving on this planet. Why? Because his or her heart cannot work under this different gravity profile! After all, our ancestors have been adapting to the gravity on Earth since their birth. It took them several millennium to get used to that G number... and you think we can accomplish that on the new planet with just a few days of training? Perhaps your muscle and bones can get used to it, but what about your internal organs?

"Think about it, my fellow humans, when we were on Earth,

trekking up the Himalayas would cause light-headedness from breathing difficulties. And now, even the flatlands on the Homeward Planet will be 1.7 times heavier than what we're used to. Do you still think we can walk around with ease? Impossible!"

At this point, Silewei sighed and closed his eyes, adding, "Unless we use the anti-gravitational system to tweak the gravity profile of this new planet, this planet is inhabitable, but that will take several hundred years... May God bless us."

After the program finished, the human race at large was crying, some even attempted suicide. Of course, with the advancements in medicine, none of the suicide attempts were successful. However, they had committed a great sin. Under the human government law, suicide was as heavy a crime as rape, it was just below than homicide.

Under such a negative and despairing environment, the HE Research Center made an announcement. With the improvement in technology like genetics, the human strengthening project had been completed...

All the normal bodies would be able to achieve the level of superhuman (at least by old Earth's standards) in the next 10 years!

After the strengthening, the Homeward Planet with its 1.7 times old Earth's gravity...

Would be habitable!

Instantly, the human society erupted in feverish cheers!

Chapter 434: Our Home

Human Calendar 26th year, January...

It had been five years since humanity arrived at the New Solar System. Today was another annual meeting for the human government, and following this meeting, there would be a grand military exercise to showcase the transformation humanity had achieved in the past five years.

Now, the maximum lifespan of human beings had reached 200 years, and it could break through to the limit of 500 years in the next 10 to 20 years. Humanity had been out of Old Earth for 26 years, and that was enough for a new generation to grow up and mature. In these five years, humanity had truly enjoyed the benefit brought on the great technological increase.

Back on Old Earth, when a country achieved a renaissance, all of its people would be able to enjoy the benefits, like modern England or the US. They were the world leaders and their citizens were the [happiest on Earth](#).

The group of people on the Hope were in a horrendous state when they left Old Earth. There were only several hundred thousand of them and they had entered the unknown cosmos with fear and anxiety. They came across many threats, and if not for humanity's will to survive, there wouldn't be a human race today.

The hardship experienced in these 26 years couldn't even be put into words, even though the Hope had the archiving habit. In fact, after the human government was officially formed, the archives became an official institution and all the human history, including the 5,000 years on old Earth and everything that happened after they went into space, were recorded into the central mainframe, physical books, and the semi-permanent electromagnetic database. The moment these things became institutionalized, no one, not even Yao Yuan, would have the right to edit them.

However, while editing them was impossible, reading them was entirely possible. In fact, any member of the human race could request to access them whenever they wanted. The several hundred thousand seniors would be in tears reading about the most recent 26 years. The memories of the sacrifice would appear in their minds and they would hope their next generation would appreciate those who had fallen for their ability to live.

But now things were different...

In the year 21, humanity arrived at the New Solar System. The population then was around 400,000 including newborns. The accurate number was closer to 380,000.

At the time, humanity only had one spaceship, the Hope, the mothership that held all human hope. Other than the Hope, there was no other spaceship, and this meant that the Hope was incredibly cramped and crowded, and the market was actually greatly monitored. The price for meat and luxury items was high. Even though nobody was starving, they survived only on staples like grains, celebratory meals were rare.

That combined with the lack of job opportunities meant that most 20-year-olds could only survive on government stipends. Yao Yuan knew this situation couldn't be allowed to continue for long. He understood that the Hope actually had outlived its use, it could no longer support the increasing population number. Furthermore, as the population increased, the quality of public amenities and environment decreased. This was a vicious cycle, one that would lead to public protests and quite possibly even anarchy...

But now things were different...

Ever since humanity arrived in the New Solar System in the year 21, following the renaissance, the job market slowly opened up. Initially, there were still limitations to the job scope, but as the vacancies increased and the size of the shops increased. In the

latest public census, it found that until the year 26, the number of university graduates over 22 years old was in reality only 320,000 people, and half of those were females. This meant that the workforce was choosing their career instead of the other way round. Even as the benefits and social services grew, the number of available workers hadn't. In fact, by year 26, there was a great lack of human power.

However, a solution was coming. In the general census in year 21, the population number was 380,000, and that shot up to 660,000 in year 26, the number almost doubled. In these past five years, most married women gave birth twice, a great number gave birth to three children, and in fact, the number of women who gave birth to a child every year, weirdly enough, was not small.

Very soon, related reports arrived at Yao Yuan's table, scientific research pertinent to this phenomenon.

This was a serious issue. In fact, there was research done on it back on old Earth, it was called "the love bridge". It was the blueprint for many famous movies, especially those war flicks. The leads who had met each other for the first time fell in love in times of war and proceeded to get married and have children after war was over. This was more than a fictional convention; in fact, this happened many times in real life as well, where fear translated into love. However, according to the study, after the fear wore off due to the mundane life, problems would pop up. Even those in movies would sometimes end up separating either by the end of the movie or at the beginning of the sequel.

The scientific explanation said that this was because humanity had the natural instinct to procreate for longevity. If the person felt that he was in danger, for the sake of extension of the human line, the body would assume the role of incubator. This was the same for both males and females. However, as the initial danger wore off, the everyday life would settle in, and unless the couple had formed a strong relationship, they would usually go their

separate ways.

This was perfectly replicated for these people in space. Ironically, this was better on the Hope because due to the limitation of the environment, salary, safety, and other clauses, most human beings wouldn't think it would be a good idea to procreate. However, once the City of Light Moon started to get built, the accommodation, medicine, food, and supplies were provided openly. With the advancement in science, those things that were considered expensive back on Earth could now be enjoyed by the general public.

Under such circumstances, the urge that had been held in for a long time exploded. This combined with the government's initiative to support a big family led to a giant baby boom. In just five years, the human population practically doubled, and almost half of the population was newborns and babies under five year old!

However, no one was really worried about this. This was one of benefits brought on by technological advancement. As more AI robots were created, they were a ubiquitous sight around society. They had spilled out of the military and joined society. They were there in the City of Light Moon and in the construction and mining sites. In fact, humanity had stopped doing manual labor because those jobs had all been taken over by the robots.

Therefore, every human now could enjoy a life that would be limited to old Earth's elites and rich. There would be private hovercrafts waiting when they went out and the hovercrafts were driven by robots. Every week, they had to spend two to three days to update the robots and the rest of the time could be spent on recreation or study. Accommodation was not an issue. With the expansion of the City of Light Moon, the actual housing area could accommodate more than a million people and the city was still expanding.

Under such circumstances, every family had a smile on their

faces. In the gardens around the City of Light Moon, there were sounds of children smiling and laughing, toddlers learning how to walk, and parents as well as grandparents looking on with love. Was this not paradise? Life was not so easy even back on Earth.

This was the benefit of technology that was way more advanced than what Old Earth used to have.

In the 26th year government meeting, Yao Yuan read the document in his hands for a long time. It detailed the progress humanity had made in the New Solar System in the past five years. So far, humanity had built 13 industrial sites, including the three general industrial bases around the City of Light Moon, two energy industrial sites on New Jupiter and New Saturn, as well as the eight mineral industrial sites in the meteorite clusters nearest to Homeward Planet.

The maximum productivity of metal was 300 million tons. With the use of AI robots and nanobots, by now, humanity had 110 motherships the size of the Hope, 350 guardian spaceships, 1,300 plus battleships, and 36,000 plus combat spaceships used by the Defense Unit.

At this point, the first defense line had been completed. It had six permanent armed fortresses, one main fortress, three Genesis Cannon towers, one Requiem Cannon tower, and various innumerable weapons. It was stationed with 3,000 Defense Unit soldiers and their families who wished to migrate with them. Combined with the maintenance workers, the first defense line had about 26,000 people.

By now, the second defense line had started work. Due to its better condition than first defense line, the predicted size of this defense line would be three times the size of first defense line. It was predicted to be completed by year 31.

By now, humanity had 228 Black Star Troopers, 22 Black Star Trooper units, and each unit had their own the Hope-sized

mothership, five guardian spaceships, and 20 battleships. Of course, their main battle force was still the troopers themselves. They had 1,500 Space Combat Jets that could combine to form a cannon, 1,500 Third Generation Space Armors, and various equipment to improve their power. The New Solar System was separated into 22 areas, each protected by one Black Star Trooper unit.

By now, humanity's technology had grown exponentially. They now had plasma reactor technology, energy shield technology, epigranular propulsion weapon technology, super long distance energy refraction technology, and the currently researching large scale epigranular storm weapon technology and many more. In other words, humanity could no longer call themselves a peak level 2 space civilization, they had officially become a level 3 space civilization. In the next 10 years, humanity would approach more level 3 space civilization technologies!

By now, the first step of terraforming Homeward Planet had started. Through the wave laser effect, around 20 percent of the planet's internal dry ice layer had been melted. In the next three years, the ozone layer around the planet would slowly form to reach the density of the ozone layer of old Earth. Similarly, in the next three years, Homeward Planet's temperature would continue to rise and that would melt more dry ice and solid ice. Before year 31, cultivation of plants on Homeward Planet and the construction of plenty of oxygen conversion machines would begin.

By now, every human being had taken a shot of the cell-strengthening potion. It was a safe potion that would strengthen the human body from the DNA level. In about 5 to 10 years, the physical condition of the human body would improve by about three to four times. The muscle, bones, organs, spirit, as well as memory would be improved. Since this was a DNA level improvement, there was no worry of regression, and the improvements would only be more pronounced as the generations

continued.

These were the many accomplishments humanity had achieved in the past five years. The accomplishments would need around 5,000 thousand years to complete if they were still on old Earth. In the meeting that was broadcasted and had almost 100 percent viewing rate, after Yao Yuan listed off the accomplishments, the applause was so thunderous that the place shook. Many elders in the crowd started to shed tears, tears of joy and excitement.

"I announce that the first five-year stage of humanity's New Solar System Project has successfully been completed. We've achieved a brilliant result, but what's more brilliant than that is... our future!

"Let us cheer, my friends. This is our home, a paradise that we've traded using our sweat and blood, our New Solar System!

"Our home!"

That is factually untrue, unsure whether the author is mocking these 2 countries or he's really that clueless.

Chapter 435: Kun Lun Progress

"Viewers as you can see, this is Kun Lun... or at least part of it. Hahaha, viewers please don't mind my glib tongue, I'm too very excited being so close to this giant creation. Engineer Lin, please introduce to us what we're seeing on screen here."

The most recent exploratory television program was focused on the human creation that had the most eyes on it... the future mothership of humanity, Kun Lun!

Engineer Lin was a reticent middle-aged man. Since the show started, he had said less than five sentences in total. This made the reporter grumble internally, "Just what are these people from the Kun Lun engineering team are thinking about? Our program is only second in ratings behind the science program. So many people are begging us to get on our show, and for the sake of this interview, we've already written them one week ahead and this is how they're treating us?"

Engineer Lin hesitated after being asked the question, then he explained, "This is the Kun Lun's external support, the twelfth skeletal support frame at Area E to be precise. Its total length is 43,000 meters long and 12,000 meters wide. It has the latest 18 holes design and is expected to be completed by the end of year 29."

Then Engineer Lin stopped talking and started to look at this large, metallic creation with something like awe in his eyes. The reporter was still waiting for him to continue, but when she realized he wasn't going to, the atmosphere became rather awkward. The only thing she could do was turn to the camera and say, "Looks like the Kun Lun has not only awed this reporter but also Engineer Lin, who has been working on it. Alright, let us pull back the camera and let the viewers see this magnificent creation for themselves."

The camera panned away to include the view of the whole

construction site. Even this support frame alone was humongous; it was as large as the Hope itself. However, in comparison, the structure's weight, or rather metallic density, was only one-fifth of the Hope, because these metallic poles that made up the structure were hollow. Of course, this was not an effect of cutting corners. After all, who would dare to cut corner on the Kun Lun project? Yao Yuan would execute that person should he find out. This was actually the result of advanced technology after humanity became a level 3 space civilization. Using the energy optimization technology, this hollow metal was created. In fact, this was an extended version of the technology back on Old Earth. Old Earth had many hollow metallic poles used in railings or bridges that had more tensile strength than a solid pole of the same size.

The design of Kun Lun had been brought about 10 years ago. At the time, many famous engineers had started the initial design. When humanity reached the New Solar System, the Kun Lun design was brought out again. However, it wasn't a smooth-sailing progress. The main reason was because the speed of humanity's technological advancement was too fast. The overall speed reminded some elders of the period between Old Earth's 20th and 21st century. At the time, the rate of technological upgrades was calculated in months and there would be something new every month. It was the technological renaissance for humanity.

This rapid progress was a point of celebration for the general public. Humanity had officially become a level 3 space civilization, and they wouldn't have to live in fear of coming across an alien space civilization anymore. They wouldn't be treated poorly by 80 percent of the space civilizations in the cosmos.

However, this rapid progress caused the designers of the Kun Lun a great deal of headaches. In the year 26, when Yao Yuan announced that the first step of the New Solar System project was completed, the Kun Lun's construction plan was moved forward. However, due to the increase in technology, they only settled on a

final design by year 27. Even so, there were still tweaks to the design until the final confirmation in year 30. Kun Lun was a manifestation of humanity's scientific prowess. As science progressed, so would the Kun Lun.

The program was broadcasted three days after it was shot. Instantly, a wave of commotion appeared in the City of Light Moon. After all, the Kun Lun's progress had been in a B-level confidentiality and the building base was on the back end of the moon where normal citizens wouldn't visit easily. Therefore, news regarding the Kun Lun was like mist. Now the public finally understood the meaning of "mothership." It was the highest manifestation of a civilization's technology, a miracle that could ferry a space civilization in the cosmos for thousands of years without the need for restocking.

The newly designed Kun Lun was 880,000 meters tall, 670,000 meters long, and 490,000 meters wide. It was bigger than its initial design of 674,000 meters height, 540,000 meters length, and 300,000 meters width. It had 42 plasma reactors, and each reactor could provide the electricity usage of the entire old Earth. Other than that, there were about 100 smaller reactors, and at maximum capacity, it could support the simultaneous space warp of the Kun Lun and around 1,600 spaceships the size of the Hope.

The Kun Lun had 16,370 residential areas of differing sizes, and each area had spacious living areas and convenient amenities. Each area could fit 100,000 people. This meant that the Kun Lun could fit 160 million people, and that was the most conservative calculation. Other than the residential areas, the Kun Lun had 16 nature parks, 41 large business areas, 160 military-related departments, as well as agricultural centers that were as large as the residential areas. One could say that the Kun Lun was something beyond the general public's comprehension!

At the same time, the Kun Lun had the latest level 3 space civilization technologies and weapons. Other than the 300

Requiem cannons, the Kun Lun also had 12 currently-being-researched particle sea long distance main cannons. It was also equipped with level 3 space civilization energy shields. An energy shield of this scale was large enough to defend against all forms of attack. Unless they ran into a level 4 space civilization or above, the shield was indestructible. In other words, if they stumbled across a similar level or lower level space civilization, the Kun Lun was invincible!

This data and the opinions from various scientists, engineers, and even military personnel were included in the program. It scored a very high rating even though the program didn't show many things, things that weren't meant for the public's eyes.

For example, the astronomical number of building materials needed to complete the Kun Lun. It was a number that required at least a whole decade of harvesting to replenish. By year 30, the Kun Lun only reached two percent completion. According to the current speed, it would be at least 100 years before Kun Lun could be used!

One hundred years, that was a crazy concept! Even though various biologists had perfected the genetic mesomeric technology in the year 28, increasing the human lifespan to 500, could humanity waste 100 years?

Yao Yuan was one of the viewers who tuned into the program. No one understood the meaning of the Kun Lun to the human race better than him. Even if it took 1,000 years, the Kun Lun had to be built because this meant that they could finally stop being fearful of space civilizations beneath level 4. No matter the enemy's numbers or technology, as long as it wasn't one level higher, like a level 4 space civilization, then humanity had nothing to worry about!

The New Solar System might've been growing at an exponential speed, but if a level 3 space civilization really attacked, the outcome of the war would not be as certain as Yao Yuan wished it

to be. Furthermore, according to Blue 6, space civilizations from the Shelters usually went out pillaging in groups. Usually, their targets would be other Shelters or isolated civilizations like humanity. Of course, humanity would win in the end due to the contribution from the Black Star Troopers, but the sacrifices would be enormous...

The more he learned about the cosmos, the more he understood about the fragility of the New Solar System. The only method to make this place a safe haven... was to finish creating humanity's own illusory space.

Yao Yuan switched off the television and sat there, quietly thinking about humanity's next development and possible struggles in space, when Guang Zhen led Zhang Heng and a few other Diviners into the room. They saluted him before Guang Zhen began, "These are the Diviners who have just returned from the corners of the New Solar System. Everyone stayed at their post for a month. Zhang Heng had it the worst, he had to stay at a spot one light year away from the New Solar System. You should ask them what they found out."

Yao Yuan nodded and turned to look at them. "I'm not going to waste my time talking about useless stuff, you've been briefed enough. This is confidential A-level information... so, did you feel any danger?"

The Diviners all shook their heads, even Zhang Heng shook his head and said, "Chancellor, there is no sense of danger. No, that isn't completely right either. I've sensed many small traces of danger, but they are very far away from us, probably hundreds of light years away from us."

"Is that so?" Yao Yuan sighed, but it was unknown whether it was from frustration or relief. After a moment, he turned to Guang Zhen and said, "Then have the Academy decrypt this message as soon as possible. Find out where it was from, the contents, and the technological level of the sender civilization..."

"I need the answer at least before the alien civilization arrives at this solar system!"

Chapter 436: Human Heroes

Jackson hugged his three-year-old daughter, his wife hugged their one-year-old son, and the three crazy brothers raced around them. This was a huge family of seven, the most common family-type within human society. Having many children was socially and morally encouraged by society.

Today, Jackson and his wife had brought their children to a special place. Unlike their children, the adult pair's faces were drawn because the building before their eyes was the Human Heroes Remembrance Hall. Unlike the metallic structures around them, this building stood out because it had a concrete façade like how most buildings used to be when they were back on old Earth.

The hall was to remember the human heroes who had sacrificed their lives for the survival of humanity after the human race stepped into space. This was the place of highest honor among the humans, a place where even Yao Yuan would feel small whenever he visited. The name of anyone here might have saved the entire human race.

Jackson brought his family into this majestic hall and the place was filled with statues of human heroes. Before their statues, there were books and placards explaining their contributions to human society. Families like Jackson's could be seen all over the hall. In fact, today, about 70,000 families were gathered at the hall, making the spacious Human Heroes Remembrance Hall feel cramped and crowded.

Today was humanity's annual Remembrance Day, a day where the human government Chancellor, Yao Yuan, Vice-Chancellor, Guang Zhen, and the various high officials would go to the hall to conduct a remembrance ritual. This tradition had started when they were on the new planet and it was modelled after the eastern tradition of grave-sweeping. It had become a national celebration as the years passed, and when this arrived every year, almost every

citizen would join. Only those with important jobs and soldiers wouldn't come.

Even though the event was huge, there weren't many protocols to follow. There weren't speeches, media interviews, or the like, everything was conducted in respectful silence. Everything would start at the Main Remembrance Plaque to pay their silent respects. There was no burning of joss sticks or paper money, just silent observation was enough.

After that, the crowd would move on to the statues. Those who were related to the human heroes by blood were allowed to stay near their statues, but others were required to move on silently. The hall was huge; just walking around it would take hours, so the place was fitted with benches for rest and even small restaurants should visitors wish to eat.

Jackson pulled his family along with the crowd. However, after 20 minutes, the children started complaining about the pain in their feet. Nevertheless, the normally permissible parents didn't stop, they just kept on walking until they stopped before the statue of an old man. The two eldest of the children had also stopped. They had been to this ceremony before and they remembered that this was their destination.

"This is your grandfather, a hero who saved humanity, the great scientist, Aleson... Kids, come pay respects to your grandfather."

Jackson said solemnly. He looked at the statue with tears in his eyes.

Aleson was once a great scientist in the field of conductors back on old Earth and was once nominated for a noble prize. He was one of the few great scientists on the Hope, and Aleson was at the forefront of that esteemed group of people, his seniority even greater than Alan and Silewei's. When humanity first faced the energy crisis, the time where humanity was trapped in the nebulous cloud and had energy left for four days, his team

suggested to conduct experiments on the newly created crystal reactors. In the end, even though the experiment was a success, he died from a shock to the heart.

This scientist had practically saved humanity, and his contribution would never be forgotten. Ever since he was made a human hero, during Remembrance Day, many would come to pay silent respects to this scientist who had given up his life for the pursuit of scientific truth. That was the highest honor available to any human.

Jackson was the grandson of his human hero. He was 40 this year, but he had the appearance of a 20-something. He survived a fire when he was still a child back on Earth, and due to the limited medical technology at the time, he walked away with a face filled with scars. However, now, the scars could no longer be seen, he looked just like a normal man.

Jackson touched the base of the statue and mumbled to himself, "Grandfather, I'm here to see you again... Early this year, we welcomed a new addition to our family. He is an active and intelligent child. After some discussion with the wife, we decided to name him 'Aleson' after you...

"Grandfather, you once told me that even though life on the Hope was tough, we at least had our future. As long as we are alive, happiness will be waiting for us in the future... You were right, Grandfather. I'm very happy and I'm sure my children will share in that happiness in the future as well. Isn't that what you fought for, Grandfather?

"It's been my lifelong dream to join the Defense Unit to carry on your legacy, but the military has just rejected me again because from my profile, they found out that I'm the grandson of a human hero... Grandfather, I don't blame you. In fact, I'm very proud because my grandfather is a human hero, but of course, a sense of disappointment can't be avoided. With your name, I'm always given the best jobs, the best social benefits, and even now when I

walk on the streets, everyone looks at me with respect. Even though I wish to use my own power to earn all these benefits, I am proud to be your grandson...

"This year is the year 30 according to the Human Calendar. We've been away from Earth for 30 years already, but I can still remember everything like it was yesterday... Then again, that might be the effect of the body-strengthening potion, something they came up with that will improve one's memory. I can now even remember very clearly the way your mustache would curl up with anger whenever I caused chaos in your office when I was just a little wee thing...

"I miss you, Grandfather..."

Jackson stood there quietly and started to space out while watching the statue. The crowd behind him moved on as the adults stopped before each statue to tell their children a story about them...

After Remembrance Day, human society returned to its busy normal life, but they carried with them the memories of Remembrance Day...

"The third Defense Unit expansion plan..."

Yao Yuan frowned as he held the proposal in his hand. Other than him, there were Guang Zhen, some representatives, and some other officials in the meeting room.

One of the representatives said, "This is too unscientific. Based on our most recent census, the number of our adult population is only 430,000, but we have to take care of 800,000 children. Under these circumstances, the fact that we have 27,000 people in the military is already scary enough. In fact, according to our data, the number of pregnant families is the lowest among military families. If one spouse is in the military, then the couple will only have one baby every two and a half years. We cannot allow this to happen. This is only our current condition; if this third expansion is

allowed and the number of the military personnel is expanded to over 50,000, then this will push humanity towards extinction!"

Another official concurred, "Even though we have moved plenty of manual labor into the hands of AI robots, those were for menial labor jobs, like harvesting, maintenance, and construction. The rest of the jobs still need to be filled by human beings. For example, the construction of the Kun Lun. Even though we already have 70,000 people working on it, we're still deeply lacking in manpower. If we insist on expanding the Defense Unit under such circumstances... I feel like this can wait..."

Other than these two, none of the other officials and representatives agreed with this proposal, causing Guang Zhen to be caught in an awkward situation, especially after the reproductive rate of the military was brought up. He was speechless against this argument. Defense Unit soldiers had to patrol and train daily, there was no opening in their schedule for them to conduct husband and wife duties. To be frank, the fact that the soldiers were given a five day holiday every month was already toeing Guang Zhen's limit. In his mind, the soldiers should only be given one holiday every year, and weekly phone contact with family was more than enough.

However, this time Yao Yuan was standing on the side of the representatives and officials...

"As technology and time progresses, our culture has to progress as well. Those that are no longer sensible have to be updated, that is how we improve as a society... Nowadays, the soldier-family structure is already outdated. We're no longer on Old Earth, where visitation took months. With the umbrella propeller system, the return trip only takes days..."

"So until the soldier-family structure is improved, the issue of the third Defense Unit expansion is off the table!"

Chapter 437: The Children

Jacko stood in front of a large group of military officers at the space port. They had been there for several hours, but no one was impatient. In fact, everyone had smiles on their faces and the occasional topics were light.

Today was the day the soldiers' families were supposed to arrive. The newly upgraded military family law focused on the soldiers stationed at the first and second defense lines as well as those posted at the meteorite factories. The number of soldiers at these places totalled to over 15,000 and their immediate families that agreed to move and stay with them was close to 100,000.

This upgrade was more than just moving the soldiers' families, that was impossible. This upgrade included a series of constructions, including an expansion of the amenities inside the defense lines and more AI robots. After all, this involved the migration of about 100,000 people, and among them were 60,000 babies and children. Questions of living arrangements, medicine, and education had to be solved.

Living arrangement were considered an easy problem to solve. With the advent of AI robots, most manual labor tasks had been taken over by them. When the time came, they would need the military wives to open a day-care center or something. With the aid from the robots, one adult would be able to take care of 10 to 20 babies or children. That meant that a big problem had been solved.

But what about medicine? AI robots weren't doctors and the medical devices within the base were meant for injured soldiers to help with recuperation. In comparison, medical services for infant and child care were lacking. Therefore, they would need a group of related doctors and nurses as well as their families...

Then came the issue of education. The eldest children born in the first wave of baby booms since humanity arrived at the New Solar

System was nine years old, so it was time for them to enter primary school. After humanity entered space, they understood the importance of education and that education was a right deserved by everyone. Currently, the years of mandatory education for humanity was 18 years, from six years old when they entered primary school to 24 years old when they graduated from university. After that, they could enter the world of academia if they wanted and the government would provide social benefits for those who did. There was no limit for the life of an academician; they could go on studying forever. The only thing that they had to do was make sure they passed the annual exam.

The fact that so many children were moving to the military bases meant that it had caused a series of explosive chain effects. From the latest government economic assessment, practically every defense line base would have to expand greatly, and in a few years, they could be called a small town. Among them, the second defense line would have the biggest base. The place was projected to be done in the year 32 and it would be able to fit 2,00,000 people...

However, these were not the concerns of the soldiers. They only knew that their families were coming to live with them. There were no more monthly visits because now they could see their families whenever they wanted to. One could say that every soldier's heart was filled with happiness and joy.

"They're here..."

The soldiers among the group started to mumble when several large transport shuttles appeared in the sky escorted by 10 guardian spaceships. However, due to their military training, none of the soldiers acted out of line, they still stood in attention. It wasn't until people walked out of the shuttles that contained commotion started among the ranks.

"Marrion, I'm here, do you see me? Marrion!"

Jacko was a group captain of the Defense Unit. It was a high rank

and this meant that he was at the front of the group. When people were ejected from the shuttles, he scanned their faces carefully. Soon, he discovered a young, beautiful Caucasian woman accompanied by two AI robots that were pulling along a pouting boy with a head of brown hair. When Jacko shouted, she immediately turned to him and a wide smile blossomed on her face. She shouted in return, "Honey, I see you! Rei, can you see him? That's your father."

The boy seemed to be in his uncooperative years because he pouted and huffed, "How can I not see him? He's so tall that he's blocking the people behind him..."

Marrion didn't get mad but reached out to pat the boy on his head lightly. Then she walked happily towards Jacko. When she reached him, she didn't care about the people around them. She leaped up into his arms and planted a passionate kiss on his lips. The boy cringed involuntarily while standing behind them. After a while, the pair separated and Jacko rushed over to pull his boy up into his hug. Then he proceeded to plant a big wet kiss on his son's cheek. "Rei, you've grown so much taller."

"Hmph, if you don't return for a few more years, then I'll be taller than you!" Rei pulled back from his father's prickly stubble and retorted in his childish ways.

Jacko then started laughing, and through the laughs, one could see some shine in his eyes. He then added, "I promise I'll come back home more often and we can stay with each other now... Didn't you say that you wanted to hear about my adventures on the cursed planet? How about we stay up through the night and I'll finish the story from where we left off?"

Rei's eyes lit up and he claimed loudly, "Liar, liar, pants on fire, you won't lie to me, right? Oh, but Mommy said I cannot stay up overnight..."

Jacko continued to laugh. "Don't worry, I'll talk to your

mother..."

Marrion then chimed in, "Come on, let's go visit your apartment. I'm sure it's a pig sty, but I'll help you clean it up... Also, you better make sure you got rid of all the signs of the other woman, or else there will be hell to pay."

Jacko laughed awkwardly as he looked around before whispering, "I wouldn't dare. Furthermore, there are only dudes around here, and I'm not gay. Come on, let's go to our new home. The accommodations were been assigned a few days ago, but I haven't had the time to move. However, while I was waiting for you to arrive, the AI robot should have moved all the furniture to the new place already. We'll stay there from now on!"

Just like that, with the boy cheering, the married couple walked to their new home holding hands. When they arrived, the family was satisfied with their new home. The place was at the end of the street, had three stories, and was already furnished. Jacko was especially excited when he saw the fireplace in the living room. He told Rei happily, "When I was small, we would use fireplaces like this when I visited your great-grandfather in the winter. We would sit by the fireplace and he would tell me his hunting stories. I hear they'll be using the four seasons cycle again starting this year, so it won't constantly be spring anymore. So when winter arrives, we can do that, Rei!"

Rei looked at the fireplace and was reminded of the many old movies about Earth that he saw, then he nodded quickly with light glowing in his eyes. Marrion commented, "This place is not bad, and look at this carpet, this is authentic mink caterpillar skin... Then again, you're a group captain. This is probably how they compensate you for returning home so rarely in the past few years."

Jacko coughed awkwardly and he later leaned in to kiss Marrion. Marrion took the hint and stopped throwing jabs at Jacko. She waltzed into the kitchen to take inventory of the utensils. After a

long time, she returned to the living room to talk to the pair of father and son who was bonding. "Alright, you can resume this conversation after dinner. Come help me if you want to eat. We'll go to the nearby mall to make some household purchases. By the way, what do you guys want to have for dinner tonight?"

"Pizza!"

The pair of father and son said in unison, "Seafood pizza with shrimp flavor!"

Marrion laughed as she shook her head. "If you want seafood pizza, then come help me. Come on, we have many things to buy!"

This situation appeared all over the second defense line. Every family was happy and everyone was celebrating their family reunion in their own way. The second defense line base was submerged in a sea of happiness. Soon, the stock of luxury items and various resources reached a red line. For this, the Defense Unit even commissioned the military ship to go back to the City of Light Moon to move some necessary produce.

Of course, that was not all. Among this move, three Steel Balls had also been secretly moved to the second defense line. Along with them were three Homo Evolutis, and one of them was S-grade Homo Evolutis Wang Hwa, a member of the Black Star Unit. His presence alongside the Steel Balls were a secret known only to those above the rank of group captain.

This didn't affect Jacko's happiness. In fact, he didn't think much about this move. He didn't believe it would affect life on the second defense line in any way. One month later, he received good news, he was promoted from captain to major as well as the leading commander of the second defense line. He became the first person originally from the Noah One to enter the upper echelons of the Defense Unit.

Chapter 438: Superlight Speed Signal

"We did it! We only needed three seconds to send the signal to the receiver 15 light seconds away. This is a great improvement!"

In a space quite far away from the New Solar System stood three giant spaceships the size of the Hope. Protecting them were 10 guardian spaceships and 200 small battleships. This could be considered a fleet according to the Defense Unit's standards. In fact, the normal patrol fleet was only this size. Therefore, it was rare for a fleet like this to just idle in the middle of nowhere.

However, those who knew about the fleet's passengers understood what they were doing implicitly.

This fleet carried three great scientists in it. They were respectively the British astrophysicist, Alan; German physicist, Silewei; and American energy expert, Stewie. Each one of them was a treasure of humanity. After all, the human race only had around 10 great scientists, this number was less than one-tenth of Homo Evolutis. The fact that three of them were gathered at the same spot meant that something historical was going to happen.

That was indeed the truth because the result of this experiment would affect humanity's projected development for hundreds or thousands of years. This was truly a historical moment because if this experiment was successful, it would mean that humanity's transference of information speed could surpass light speed!

Light speed had a very unique representation in space because it was the threshold to determine whether a space civilization could survive in space. The cosmos was too large, so large that it would make any non-immortal lifeform feel great despair. For example, the distance between one solar system and the next was between 10 light years to several thousand light years, while the distance between one galaxy and the next would be calculated in tens of thousands or millions of light years.

If a space civilization wanted to survive in the cosmos, the first thing they needed to do was overcome the limitation of light speed, or else travelling from one solar system to the next would take thousands of years. Within these thousands of years, the exhaustion on the supplies storage would be tremendous. Furthermore, if you had too few people in your spaceship, that would lead to a weakened gene pool and thus deterioration of soul, but if you brought too many people, it would lead to drought and starvation. Many level 1 space civilizations were lost in space due to this challenge.

Under this situation, the appearance of the warp drive changed everything. This was the first navigation technique in space that could surpass the limitation of light speed. It was because of this that travelling between solar systems was possible and a space civilization could grow and advance. According to the technological level of the space civilization, the speed of warp drive could be several times to several hundred times faster than light speed.

However, this was merely navigational speed. While travelling speed could break through the barrier of light speed using warp drive, what about signal and information? Be it light waves, electronic waves, or subatoms, they were all still limited by the barrier of light speed. At least in current human technology, there was no information transfer technique that could surpass light speed. This meant that the fleet might have already reached the destination, but the information sent earlier hadn't reached the destination. This was a crazy event!

To put it simply, if the New Solar System was suddenly under siege by a large amount of level three space civilizations, then this meant that the enemy would already be at humanity's doorstep when they received any information about the assault, this was unacceptable. This meant that humanity could never receive any warning about approaching space civilizations in advance.

In fact, many level 3 space civilizations were caught in this conundrum. Becoming a level 3 space civilization represented a general safety of the space civilization since the number of high tier and middle tier space civilizations was too small.

Therefore, most level 3 space civilizations were considered the powerful forces among normal space, and the normal course of action for these powerful space civilizations was to build a Shelter, and Shelters were often targets for other space civilizations. If every assault on a Shelter was a silent assault, no one would be able to stand it for long, because this meant that even though demolished a Shelter, you could be destroyed by another civilization immediately after.

Therefore, those space civilizations at the edge of level 3 and level 4 would start to research on how to break through the barrier of light speed for information transference, especially superlight speed surveillance, to scan the enemy travelling in warp drive.

This kind of civilization had started to edge towards level 4. In other words, they had started the research on time and space. In their minds, since solid materials could surpass light speed using warp drive, then could information be transferred using the same method? Then the further extrapolation would be, could certain surveillance techniques utilize this method to scan threats that are many light years away?

In fact, theoretically speaking, this kind of superlight speed surveillance and communication was not impossible. In fact, most level 3 space civilizations would have touched upon it in their middle stage. As they ushered in the new breakthrough in energy research, they would improve upon warp drive. For space civilizations in the initial stages of level 3, their warp drive speed would be have reached 50 times light speed.

When they became middle stage level 3 space civilization, with research on the atomization of energy and nano-control technology, they would manifest in the improvement in warp

drive and super energy ray communication during warp drive. In this situation, people could communicate with each other during warp drive and even survey the surroundings outside of the warp drive dimension.

As one continued to perfect this technology, and when one could initiate warp drive on pure energy, then this meant that the energy ray could surpass the barrier of light speed to transport information. In terms of surveillance, with nano-control and atomization of energy, they could reach out to "grab" basic particles several light years away using warp drive, and this was the basis of superlight speed surveillance. In reality, the information itself was still several ten, or even hundred light years away, but by using this technique, they could copy and fetch the information.

This technique was something that was not available to humanity; however, humanity did receive it from the space merchant alongside the warp drive technology. At the time, humanity's technological level was still too far from understanding them, so they were sealed up and kept.

Until these two years when humanity had become an initial stage level 3 space civilization, this rare information humanity had obtained from the space merchants or the cursed planet proved invaluable to inspire the Academy. Since the most crucial point for humanity at the time was the defense, and if the defense lines didn't fall, humanity's new home would be safe. Due to this, the research on superlight speed communication and scanning was pushed forward. Thus far, there were about nine great scientists who had joined this task force, and Bo Li was also in it to provide inspiration and answers in her capacity as a Whisperer.

Even so, humanity still spent two years before they reached the first breakthrough and could conduct super light speed surveillance within five light years, detect the presence of warp drive within five light years, and increase the transfer of

information to over five times light speed.

However, this was truly the most basic of breakthroughs. This was the current maximum speed achievable by humanity. Each increase of 0.1 over light speed would exhaust the energy needed by 10 times. 10 times the current amount of energy! With such a rate of energy exhaustion, only the alloy created by the alien plant could support it. The metals created by humanity themselves could no longer support such intense energy flow. In fact, if the information went beyond the five light years limitation, even the AI wouldn't be able to process the information quick enough...

In conclusion, even though humanity had managed to secure this technology that was only available to the middle stage level 3 space civilizations thanks to the help of the Whisperers, humanity had no basic technology to support it. This was the manifestation of a low technological prowess, similar to how even though level 2 space civilizations could use warp drive, the speed it could achieve compared to an actual level 3 space civilization was... laughable.

Regardless, this breakthrough still brought about a momentous change to the New Solar System's defense system. Humanity was no longer fighting in the dark...

Just like that, this fleet brought the three great scientists back to the City of Light Moon to deliver the good news. Three months later, the Defense Unit at the first and second defense lines started building the superlight speed surveillance devices, and when they used them for the first time, the entire human civilization was stumped into silence...

In a space less than 4 light years away from the New Solar System, a fleet was travelling in warp drive at 20 times the speed of light, and its destination was...

the New Solar System!

Chapter 439: Intention to Approach

"It has been three days since we have started the superlight speed surveillance engine. With the data compiled from 17 searches, it is confirmed that the alien fleet is travelling at 20 times the speed of light in warp drive. At the same time, we have concluded the actual numbers of the fleet. There are in total about 4,750 spaceships, the largest of them about one-third the size of the Hope, and the small spaceships are slightly bigger than our battleships..."

This message had been sent 17 times after the superlight speed surveillance engine had been activated, and the tone each time was more intense compared to the one before it!

This was such big news! The breakthrough in superlight speed surveillance and communication was something worth celebrating. With the societal and technological improvements, humanity's education system had changed drastically. The most obvious being the education syllabus. The old syllabus had been completely abandoned and preschool education had been taken over by AI robots. The syllabus for primary school had become much more vibrant and its level was equal to the high school syllabus from old Earth. The education for high school was all about the knowledge of a level 2 space civilization, while university included teaching of knowledge for a peak level 2 space civilization and some for a level 3 space civilization.

Just like that, as the general knowledge of the public increased, even high school students were able to tell the importance of these two breakthroughs. Before this breakthrough was achieved, even though humanity had dominated this New Solar System, their claims were actually only limited to several points. The size of these points combined was barely noticeable compared to the actual size of the whole New Solar System. Furthermore, these main points were unable to communicate instantly with one

another, and this was a great weakness to the defense of the New Solar System.

With these two breakthroughs, the New Solar System could be better protected. As long as it was within five light years, communication could be achieved instantly. Five light years covered the entire New Solar System, and with the completion of the superlight speed surveillance engine, the defense system of the New Solar System was finally completed. If there was a foreign threat, the human fleet stationed at the outermost first defense line and the still-building third defense line would be able to be alerted. They could even use the super long-range weapons available at the defense lines.

This was a technological breakthrough that could change the way of life of the whole of human society; this was unlike how things were when humanity first discovered the atomic bomb. However, the joyous occasion was instantly shattered by the news of an invasion. This was the first time in decades since humanity had had contact with another space civilization.

The cosmos was no walk in the park, and there was no kindness between different space civilizations. Even among similar races, like back on old Earth, there was continuous fighting for the sake of profit, and this was even more true for races in space.

This was more than a difference in space civilizations, it might be a basic difference in lifeforms. For example, humanity was mammalian, the enemy might be amphibian, or they might not even be a carbon-based organism. There would be difference in societal formation, thought process, spirit, value, morality, and the rest. Other than open war, there was hardly any other way that these two could exist together in the same space.

Take for an example the Blue Race's vassal races. To become the Blue Race's vassal and enjoy the protection the Blue Race provided, the vassal races had to sacrifice a certain amount of population every year to the Blue Race. This was the basic demand for most

vassal races. Do you think there is kindness in space?

It had been 31 years since humanity left Earth and arrived at the New Solar System. The things that they had experienced in those 31 years informed them to not expect any kindness in the cosmos. The cosmos was survival of the fittest. Do not expect mercy from any space civilizations that are not human. To survive, humanity had to fight and kill, this was the blood lesson learned from 31 years of travelling in space!

17 scans within three days put a great toll on the energy consumption of the City of Light Moon. This was an exhaustion that would be felt by a level 3 space civilization; it was an amount that couldn't be replaced just like that. However, humanity still needed to perform those 17 scans. The aim was to procure a surveillance result that was as detailed as they could get. This led to a fiery discussion among the human government's higher officials...

"I suggest we initiate the Defense Unit third expansion project immediately! We need to expand the Defense Unit to reach at least 50,000 soldiers and have the first fleet assault this alien fleet the moment they exit space warp!"

This was the ninth military meeting the Barracks had had since the 17th scanning report. The meeting room was submerged in some kind of smog. The air circulatory system sucked out the air and replaced it with more smog. The people inside inhaled the smog like it was some kind of cigar or cigarette smoke. It was a bloodshot-eyed Guang Zhen who claimed the statement above.

A major beside him said instantly, "Commander Wong, if we expand the army now, what about new soldier training? This will only drag down the overall fighting power of the Defense Unit. I agree with the expansion, but that will have to wait until this crisis is over."

Yao Yuan retorted instantly, "No, I believe that is not what

Commander Wong meant. We do need to expand the Defense Unit, and the third expansion project has to begin immediately to make sure the number of Defense Unit soldiers is not lower than 50,000 people..."

Most of the people were confused, while a handful nodded as if they had expected this. Among them, Xiao Niao commented, "It's because... this alien fleet doesn't have a mothership?"

"Indeed." Yao Yuan nodded and continued, "The lack of a mothership means that this fleet is not the main force of the civilization. In fact, we can see from the size of the fleet that this is merely a small exploratory unit. This is definitely not the entirety of the civilization. This means that even if we destroy this fleet, it doesn't mean that we have achieved victory. We have to expect the arrival of the main fleet. Therefore, the expansion of the Defense Unit has to be carried out!"

Other people were slowly bought over by this explanation, and Guang Zhen asked in a serious expression, "You've only agreed to one of my suggestions. What about the other? Moving the New Solar System's first fleet to beyond the New Solar System to ambush this alien fleet. What do you think about that?"

Yao Yuan responded in equal an measure of seriousness, "Theoretically, I have no right to intervene in your combat decisions as the commander of the Defense Unit because the first fleet belongs to the Defense Unit... However, you should listen to the opinion of the strategy department."

Guang Zhen looked at the soldiers around him and said, "Of course, I'm not one to act rashly. To set up an ambush at the exit point of the warp drive was the plan the strategy department came up with. Black Star Troopers will also be involved in this ambush and we will be able to achieve victory with the smallest amount of forces. Furthermore, the battle will be far away from the New Solar System and thus we won't need to worry about endangering the public."

"That was before." Yao Yuan shook his head and said, "That plan was made before we had more details. At this time, we still do not know the size of the fleet. Let's say this ambush is a success and we destroy this fleet, how will that benefit us? We will only end up with another space junkyard and increased hostility from the unknown level 3 space civilization... so we better wait for the next simulated war from the strategy department and see what they come up with."

Guang Zhen didn't say anything after that. The meeting room was silent and the strategy department worked fast with the aid of the AI robots.

"...From the data given by the strategy department, this fleet should belong to a space civilization that is between the early and intermediate stage of level 3. This can be seen from the speed they're travelling in warp drive. In other words, when its fleet comes into contact with ours, be it numbers or power, we have the upper hand in terms of numbers and power. In fact, the advantage we have over them in terms of weapons is huge. After all, they were all designed by a Whisperer...

"Therefore, this concludes that the civilization doesn't pose too big of a threat to humanity. From our information archives, the interaction between level 3 space civilizations doesn't usually lead to a space war unless it is a fight for a Shelter. Therefore, as long as we do not expose our overwhelming number of Homo Evolutis, then just with our current population alone, it won't be that attractive of a reward to the outside threat. Furthermore, we humans are a level 3 space civilizations ourselves. Under these conditions, there is a 90 percent chance that this level 3 space civilization will just have surface interaction with us, probably exchange information and materials. The possibility of a war is very low...

"Since this fleet is mostly likely only an exploratory fleet, the strategy department suggests we approach it with a pilotless

spaceship. Based on the interaction, we will then decide what to do next. Before they show their intention, we have to be careful of the front that we put up. It's better that we do not show hostility upfront...

"Over."

Chapter 440: Assignment

On the seventh day after the strategy department came up with the plan, about 72 emergency-created pilotless spaceships left the City of Light Moon. Each of the spaceships was equipped with a superlight speed communication device and surveillance device. If they managed to detect something, even if just for one over fifty seconds, the information would be sent to the City of Light Moon. Therefore, it was okay if these spaceships were destroyed, because a great amount of information would still be sent back. If contact was made without hostility, even if there was no one piloting the spaceships, communication could be made without delay.

"There are in total 72 spaceships. They will separate into three groups, so unless the other party has decided to attack us directly, all three groups of armless communication spaceships won't be destroyed on sight."

The military engineer responsible for communication and innovation answered. Even though they only had seven days to design and create the spaceships, humanity already had the technological prowess to say something like this. The technology of a level 3 space civilization was something those beneath level 3 couldn't understand. The electromagnetic technology that once impressed humanity greatly was now considered outdated by a level 3 space civilization. The difference between then and now was like heaven and earth; it was no wonder so many level 2 space civilizations would give up everything to become a level 3 space civilization...

It was worth noting that after humanity became a level 3 space civilization, Yao Yuan and other Barracks officials would wake up in the night with cold sweat. The reason was because they were reminded of the fact they once destroyed a Shelter and the level 3 space civilization within it with one shot of the Gravity Cannon. After that success, many humans, including the military experts,

while they still held a cautious attitude regarding level 3 space civilizations, didn't see them as a huge threat that could wipe out the human race anymore.

However, after humanity became a level 3 space civilization, they truly understood the difference between the different levels. That difference was no longer something that could be described in numbers. The best weapon of a peak level 2 space civilization, be it the Genesis or Requiem, wouldn't even threaten the energy shield of level 3 space civilization, while the most basic weapon of a level 3 space civilization, like the trooper plasma pistol, was not something defensible by level 2 space civilization standards. A large scale energy weapon of a level 3 space civilization could take out the whole mothership of a level 2 space civilization with one shot!

Seven days, it only took seven days for humanity to design and create 72 pilotless spaceships attached with the latest communicative technology... In conclusion, you're a level 3 space civilization, I'm a level 3 space civilization, so let's not mess with each other!

Of course, that was not everything humanity did. The New Solar System first fleet had returned to the City of Light Moon to prepare for a possible war. At the same time, all the Black Star Troopers were ordered to return and their patrol duties would be taken over by the Defense Unit. Other than a few troopers, all of the rest were tasked to return to the City of Light Moon to defend it.

Within human society, the news about the expansion of the Defense Unit had been spread. To the government's surprise, the number of citizens who enrolled was greater than they expected, and most of them were young people around or less than 30 year old. To put it simply, the generation that was born in space was passionate in joining the military. In fact, some had given up jobs like scientists and engineers to join the military.

No matter what, humanity's war machine had been started, and the people were slowly getting into place. The fleet travelling in warp drive maintained their speed of 20 times the speed of light and it would take them another two months before they reached the edge of the New Solar System. These two months were enough for humanity to prepare for war. They had given up the expansion of the City of Light Moon and focused on arming the New Solar System first fleet, weapon maintenance, and upgrades. Even considering the citizen migration project from the first and second defense lines, two months was more than enough to complete those things.

The speed of the 72 pilotless spaceships was extremely fast. After abandoning the large devices for ferrying people, leaving behind only the communicative devices and energy storage, these pilotless spaceships were the fastest spaceships humanity had. In fact, their speed was easily 10 times the speed of battleships. On the 15th day of military expansion, the pilotless spaceships had reached the space outside of the New Solar System, the spot where the alien fleet was expected to exit warp drive. The 72 spaceships thus started to wait.

Then it was one and a half months away from the alien fleet arriving. The first batch of 6,000 new Defense Unit soldiers had started their training and the Black Star Troopers' spaceships had started their maintenance and upgrades to fit them with the newly designed weapons of a level 3 space civilization. The troopers themselves were given the latest multi-purpose space armor. At the same time, the New Solar System first fleet had finished the upgrade and left the City of Light Moon to head towards the third defense line. There were in total 20 spaceships the size of the Hope, 120 guardian spaceships, and 300 battleships.

So far, the size of the New Solar System first fleet was far from the size that they were expected to have. There were supposed to be in total 250 spaceships the size of the Hope, 1,500 guardian

spaceships, and 3,000 battleships. Regardless, from the numbers alone, this was a very powerful space fleet... or at least, it looked like so from the human perspective, and at least the number was greater than the alien fleet currently in warp drive.

Of course, due to the expansion in military, this caused a drought in spaceship pilots, so most ships had to rely on AI. However, even so, the New Solar System first fleet had exhausted about 20,000 Defense Unit soldiers, but this number was still far away from the actual number that should join the battle. To put it simply, even with the aid of AI, each spaceship the size of the Hope would need 120 people to pilot it, the guardian spaceships would need 30, and battleships five. Though these were the bare minimum numbers, they already added up to at least 90,000 people, and that was without taking into account the maintenance crew and the rest. If one needed to showcase the maximum power of the first fleet, they would need at least 200,000 people.

Because of this, Guang Zhen was nervous about the expansion of the Defense Unit. To quote the man, humanity already had enough manufacturing power, especially since they had stepped into the threshold of a level 3 space civilization, with the advent of nanobots. With enough materials and energy, a spaceship the size of the Hope could be created within 15 days. However, in comparison, the lack of manpower had greatly decreased the potential of the New Solar System first fleet. Its current size was only one-fifth of its maximum potential!

However, the reality wasn't that simple. This wasn't a story or a game where people could be moved in and out of the military with ease. You would need several hundred thousand soldiers, and you'd get them from the overall population? Things were not that easy!

Does the human population need to expand? Does science need to advance? Does human society need to grow? Guang Zhen was not right in his words, but soldiers wouldn't be able to have a child

every year like normal citizens. This had greatly dragged down the expansion of human population because for soldiers, during the times of peace, they would have to join training, patrol, and the like, so they wouldn't have time for other stuff. In that case, what about the expansion of new manufacturing bases and new harvesting and mining centers? Education of the people, invention of science? What about all that? Give up everything and everyone take up arms?

It was not that people didn't know about the importance of the Defense Unit and first fleet, but humanity needed to advance, so not everyone could be dragged into military service!

Therefore, when the first fleet was fully upgraded, only 20 spaceships the size of the Hope, 120 guardian spaceships, and 300 battleships left the harbor of the City of Light Moon. This made Guang Zhen sigh incessantly.

The real idea of the military he had in mind was a large Defense Unit army. The Black Star Troopers were indeed strong, but they were like Old Earth's Special Ops, they shouldn't be used as the main force. But the reality of the situation shattered his wish. From the current perspective, the Black Star Troopers were still the main fighting force for humanity, and this wouldn't change in the foreseeable future...

Yao Yuan, who stood behind Guang Zhen, patted him on the shoulder and said, "Ol' Wong, don't think too much of it. After all, the Defense Unit is expanding, and we have reached the 50,000 limit. To go beyond that, humanity's population number is still too low. However, one day, I assure you that you'll be the sky covered by spaceships the size of the Hope..."

Guang Zhen sighed but didn't say anything. Both of them walked on in silence. Suddenly, a hovercraft deposited a few worried-looking officers. The one leading was Liu Bai. He looked around and whispered concernedly, "We have to return to the Barracks immediately! Things are getting worse, the speed of the alien fleet

in warp drive has suddenly increased! Its speed...

"Is moving towards the peak of a level 3 space civilization's warp drive speed!

"It's now going over 400 times the speed of light!"

Chapter 441: Sudden Arrival!

"...Yes, from our known information, there is a constant in the structure of the universe. In other words, when the active force is not over a certain threshold, space will exist in normal three dimensional space, but if this force is over this threshold, there will be chain effect that happens to this space, either tearing, twisting, or energizing...

"...The most relevant example is the black hole. It has an incredibly large gravity, and the large gravitational force causes the space to twist. This means that light can no longer travel at normal speed around it and consequently this means that time travels differently around it as well...

"...Similarly, when this large force affects space and time, the stability quotient of space will be affected as well. When the force is within this stability quotient, it will react within the expected rules of physics that we have in current space. However, when this force goes over the stability quotient, it will cause plenty of changes, including the change of dimension and time flow. In fact, as we have predicted, the technology of a level 4 space civilization or middle-tier space civilization like the wormhole is very possibly predicated on the manipulation of this space stability quotient...

"...Therefore, obtaining the standard formula of calculating space stability quotient is very pertinent because it is no less important than Einstein's mass-energy equation!"

This was a thesis that was released by the Academy during the scientific renaissance after humanity became a level 3 space civilization. The thesis was titled "Space, Energy, Time, Mass: The Four Basic Elements of the Cosmos." Its writer was physicist Silewei, and the publication of this thesis had propelled him to the same state of fame and importance as Einsten and Newton.

The relevance of this thesis was huge, even Blue 6's eyes shone

brightly the moment he read it. In that half a year, he kept going to Silewei for lessons like a high school student. To quote Blue 6, this thesis could be considered the bible for scientific breakthroughs of a level 3 space civilization.

This thesis had introduced a brand new perspective, that was the existence of space stability quotient. This quotient came with a standard formula and its appearance solved many problems faced by the Academy. For example, it completely undermined the warp drive's limitless travelling speed. In this formula, warp drive had an upper limit speed, and this limit was the space stability quotient. Normally speaking, warp drive would only continue to approach this limit but would never reach it because warp drive itself was a manipulation of space to initiate rapid travelling. If space didn't exist anymore, then how could warp drive still exist? Therefore, warp drive had a limit just like how normal mass in space had the limit of the speed of light, one could only approach it but never reach or surpass it.

Generally speaking, the higher the technological level of the civilization, the closer they would be able to get to this limit during warp drive. This was true even for level 9 space civilizations because that was how warp drive operated. The only way to surpass this space stability quotient was to utilize a navigational method that was more advanced than warp drive, like wormhole and star gate.

In fact, this thesis had discussed that as well. The formation of wormholes was quite possibly due to the energy saturation within a constant unit of space and time. In other words, the force was greater than this stability quotient, and then they used some kind of method to initiate wormhole breakthrough. This perhaps was the navigational method of a level 4 space civilization.

The calculated speed limit for warp drive was 528 times light speed!

Civilizations in the early level 3 stage could reach up to 50 times

the speed of light, while in the intermediate stage, they could go up to 300 times, while peak level 3 space civilizations... like the Blue Race, could only reach 400 times the speed of light. Any increase in speed after that, even just 0.1 times, would expand such a great amount of energy that no level 3 space civilization would be able to support it.

However, this alien fleet, after increasing in speed, had reached 420 times the speed of light!

"Why!? How can they suddenly increase speed in warp drive?!"

Yao Yuan's roar reverberated through the whole Barracks. This was the first time the man who had been exceptionally calm since humanity arrived at the New Solar System became so angry. This stunned the room into silence. After a long time, it was a military engineer who answered, "Chancellor, this issue is complicated. Our current technology is still unable to change speed in warp drive, but it is indeed possible. However, one needs to reach the intermediate stage of level 3 before one can do that..."

Yao Yuan sighed and practically slumped down in his chair. "No, this is my fault for not predicting our enemy could be using tricks. When we came up with superlight surveillance engine, we should've expected them to have the same technology. Perhaps that initial 20 times light speed was just a ploy for us to let our guard down from the very beginning. We fell for it hook, line, and sinker!"

Guang Zhen's face was also dark. The fury inside his heart couldn't even be described using words. This was on top of the Defense Unit expansion issues. If there were enough soldiers, the whole New Solar System first fleet wouldn't have to return to the City of Light Moon for war preparations. Now they were hit by an underhanded tactic that could be prevented if the Defense Unit was bigger, so how could he not be angry?

Yao Yuan took in several deep breaths as he looked around at

Guang Zhen, the members of the Black Star Unit, two Thinkers, the majors from Defense Unit, and the strategy department. With a drawn face, he announced, "I order for the Black Star Troopers to get ready. I order that all Black Star Troopers gather in the next 72 hours, and in the next five days, we will leave the City of Light Moon and head for the third defense line. In 10 days, Black Star Troopers have to reach the third defense line and then wait for my next orders.

"I order, the mass deportation of civilians at the first, second, and third defense lines. No need to wait for civilian-use shuttles, just use the military spaceships. At the same time, all three defense lines are now in heavy alert mode. If they're assaulted, retaliate with maximum power!

"I order the tweaking of the Gravity Cannon to start immediately. The cannon has to be ready for use in 15 days.

"From this moment onwards, human society is in military state. In the next 24 hours, all the travelling spaceships have to return to the City of Light Moon and we will not accept any private requests to leave the city."

Following Yao Yuan's orders, the whole human society started to turn chaotic. Thankfully, the human government had great efficiency. In just few hours, all the relevant parties had received the news and the whole civilization mobilized with great efficiency.

Blue 6's foreign affair department also had started to mobilize. In reality, compared to the humans' reaction, Blue 6 was more excited, excited at the prospect of work. If not for the fact that his Emissary of Peace's spaceship was in the maintenance phase, he would've probably led his men to the frontline first.

Just like that, as the whole human race was urgently working, the alien fleet finally left warp drive two days later. Now humanity could finally scan this whole fleet clearly.

It was a clean and strong-looking space fleet. All the spaceships had a silvery-white color and there was no sign of racial senescence. The whole fleet looked brand new, gleaming in space like stars. Furthermore, before the alien fleet exited warp drive, the last superlight speed surveillance detected hundreds of extra spaceships. However, when the fleet escaped warp drive, the extra spaceships were nowhere to be seen. This caused people from the military department to think this was more of their tricks.

They wanted to initiate a second scan, but before that could start, the extra fleet appeared from warp drive, and the moment they did so, they released creator's particle, disabling all of humanity's surveillance methods.

However, the alien fleet didn't move towards the New Solar System after they did that. They merely stood their quietly, and one thing that gave humanity much relief was that the creator's particle didn't cover the 72 pilotless spaceships. It was unknown whether this was done on purpose or not. At least this alien fleet didn't show humanity any hostility directly.

Back at the City of Light Moon, everyone was busy. Yao Yuan sat quietly in central command, waiting for the next move... or rather, he was waiting for this alien fleet to make their first move.

"Send out 24 pilotless spaceships to approach this fleet carefully. Move them close to the edge of their creator's particle and wait for them to respond!"

After Yao Yuan gave that order, the 3D image showing the location of the pilotless spaceships and the alien fleet appeared in the room. Following Yao Yuan's order, the 24 spaceships started to move towards the silvery fleet.

Due to the size of the image, even though they might've appeared to move slowly on screen, they were in fact travelling at 80 percent of the spaceship's maximum speed. However, they had only moved for several minutes and hadn't even reached the edge of creator's

particle when a mess of plasma rays shot out from the silvery spaceships and shot down these 24 spaceships easily. Not only that, more plasma rays targeted the remaining pilotless spaceships, and in just the blink of an eye, an explosion erupted in space and all the pilotless spaceships disappeared in space...

Silence reigned in central command. Everyone's face was dark. However, before they could react, several soldiers ran into the room. The leading soldier stopped at Yao Yuan's side and passed him a report. When Yao Yuan read the report, his face darkened greatly.

"The last warp scan showed that...

"...the unknown silver fleet has in total.... 1,763,722 spaceships, and the spaceships that are bigger than the Hope number at more than 100,000!

"They will reach the edge of the New Solar System in another five days!"

Chapter 442: Artificial Intelligence Civilization

"Impossible! This number is impossible! What kind of civilization can have 1,700,000 plus spaceships?"

When Yao Yuan handed the report to all the officers present, everyone displayed an expression of disbelief. Even Yao Yuan himself shared in this incredulity. After all, this was 1,700,000 spaceships, and the spaceships weren't small battleships but gigantic spaceships! Their size was so much bigger than the biggest spaceships humanity once imagined in the old Earth era. Just to paint a picture, humanity would need 10,000 years to build 1,700,000 spaceships!

Fine, it was not impossible for a space civilization to last for more than ten thousand years in space while being lucky enough to avoid racial senescence, but there was still a key problem... where would they find the manpower to control all these spaceships?

Not every space civilization was as lucky as humanity that they had an existence like ZERO to prevent the uprising of the machines. If other civilizations followed humanity's footsteps, it would easily lead to a mechanical anarchy, causing the race to go extinct. Therefore, most space civilizations had real people piloting their spaceships and, generally speaking, a spaceship the size of the Hope would require 12,000 people, and that was the baseline. Including the soldiers, the number could triple!

Using the most basic 8,000 people as basis, 100,000 spaceships the size of the Hope would already need 800 million people to pilot!

This was 120 million, not 1,200 or 12,000, basically, the whole country of China, including the seniors and children, would have to join the army to achieve this number!

This was only the 100,000 spaceships the size of the Hope. What

about the remaining 1,600,000 plus spaceships of differing sizes? To operate these spaceships to their maximum potential, at the very least there had to be 100 million soldiers!

Therefore, the issue of population alone made it impossible for such a space fleet to exist in the real world!

"No, there is a type of space civilization that can support a fleet this size..."

When everyone was grumbling about the impossibility of the situation, a shaking voice suddenly uttered that statement. Everyone turned towards it and they realized that Blue 6, who had been leisurely enjoying his coffee earlier, had stood up with his face blanched and his whole body shaking. This was so unlike him that everyone was spooked.

Yao Yuan, Xiao Niao, Ren Tao, and a few military officers looked at the state he was in and their hearts dropped. There was already a prediction on their minds, and Blue 6 had just confirmed it.

"It's a mechanical civilization, a mechanical civilization born from an AI that achieved independence! Only such a space civilization can own such a large fleet without worry for manpower and population. And only such a space civilization can have a fleet that looks always brand new, like they have just been built!" Blue 6 said as color continued to drain from his face.

After the statement was made, everyone in the room was stunned by fear. The three great tragedies in the cosmos were demons, Zerg, and AI civilizations. The demons were usually too rare to warrant too much discussion, but Zerg and AI were well known space threats. Scary stories about them had been circulated around the cosmos, and according to the information from the space merchants, they were responsible for many extinctions in space.

One could say that both the Zerg and AI civilizations were considered invincible when fighting against enemies of the same level. There had to be more than several hundred space

civilizations of the same level working together to take down one AI space civilization. Plus, it wouldn't be an easy win. This was because neither zerg nor AI had the issue of exhaustion. With enough energy and resources, a war was just like a game for either civilization. They could recreate their armed forces easily, and that was why both of these space civilizations were considered invincible among civilizations of the same level!

However, if that was all, it might've still been okay. For a surviving space civilization, surrendering to become another race's vassal race was acceptable. In fact, for weaker space civilizations, becoming the vassal race of a powerful civilization was something they yearned for. However, for Zerg and AI civilizations, they did not need any vassals or surrendering races. Their only aim was to consume and destroy any living existence!

Yao Yuan thought about the possibility of this large fleet being an AI space civilization and his face blanched as well. After a long time, he said, "Order the pilotless spaceships at the first defense line to approach the area near the unknown fleet for interaction and surveillance. At the same time... increase the speed of civilian migration."

At the first defense line, things were busy. Many civilians were registering at the space port to retreat back to the City of Light Moon. However, to prevent chaos, the real number and level of the space civilization that approached humanity was not revealed. It was also because of this that the speed of migration was slower than expected.

"Honey, why don't me and kids leave next week? Our neighbors, Tom and his family, are leaving then as well. It's better if I wait and leave with them. At least we can look after each other and our kids can keep each other company."

Lee Yuan Fang's wife suggested. Their family was already at the waiting hall of the space port and they were surrounded by people. Around 3,000 civilians would be leaving the first defense line that

day. Since all the military spaceships had returned to the City of Light Moon for upgrades and maintenance, the civilians at the first defense line could only rely on transport shuttles. The trip home would take about 20 days, five days to reach second defense line and another 15 days to reach the City of Light Moon. It was worth noting that their destination was actually the second defense line as the base was at least 10 times larger than the first defense line. There, they would hop on military-use spaceships. More than ten thousand people would be able to fit into one and return to the City of Light Moon in one go.

Lee Yuan Fang's family was scheduled to take the ship home that day, and the next trip would be after five days. He told his wife in a helpless smile, "How is that possible? The schedule is decided by the government and not ourselves. Furthermore, Tom's family will be leaving in another five days. If you need the company, why don't you wait for them at the second defense line for a few days and you can return to the City of Light Moon together?"

Lee Yuan Fang's wife nodded obediently as she reached out to smooth out his military lapel. "Be careful out there. Don't be a hero, our family doesn't need the status of Human Hero... I just want you to return home safely." At this point, there were glistening tears in his wife's eyes.

Lee Yuan Fang hugged his wife silently and turned to look at his kids, who were pulling on his trousers and shirt. They were a pair of boy and girl, one eight and the other nine. He tousled their hair in a loving way before turning to his wife and saying, "Wait for me at home. I will retire from the military after this war and then we'll have plenty of time to go shopping and bring the kids to visit the zoo..."

The wife nodded gently and looked at the man she had fallen in love with... they were considered an elderly couple on the Hope because they were already a young married couple back on old Earth. While many couples had turned on each other during the

anarchy, their love only got stronger. She was reminded of that fact while they were hiding in an abandoned house. He had laid traps to capture the rats and he would leave her the meat of the roasted rats while he would survive on the dried coats and skins. Surviving on those rats, they lived through the most difficult period of their lives...

"I will wait for you at home. You must return home safely, for the kids... for me..."

"I will..."

At the same time, while the first batch of civilians was dispatched from first defense line, several pilotless spaceships were heading towards the unknown fleet. On the third day after the first batch left the first defense line, the few spaceships reached that space occupied by the unknown fleet. Following their orders, they moved towards the fleet.

However, the result was obvious. Similar to last time, the moment they got near, they were shut down. The unknown fleet showed zero desire to communicate.

"Can we be sure we're dealing with an AI civilization?"

"Not yet, the fleet is still idling outside of the solar system. They didn't unleash any attacks or release any signals; however, the moment our spaceships get too close, they are destroyed..."

"Is that so? Continue being on alert... I allow you all the power to command an attack if we're threatened..."

Yao Yuan put down the communicator with the leader of the first defense line. Then he turned to look towards the 3D image of the New Solar System. There were three large zoned-out areas around the three defense lines. These three zones referred to the firing range of the long-distance weapons. In fact, the three defense lines practically covered the whole New Solar System. Other than the first and second defense lines, which faced ahead, the third defense

line faced the other end of the City of Light Moon. Currently, the unknown fleet was in the first and second defense lines' firing range. The total defense zone in the New Solar System were five, and they protected Homeward Planet fully and completely.

"Why aren't they attacking? Waiting for more to come? Or...

"They're watching us?"

Chapter 443: Defense Line!

On the fifth day after the silver fleet arrived, humanity sent out the third batch of pilotless spaceships. The second batch of civilians from first defense line was moving towards the second defense line. Right at this moment too, the space around the silver fleet started to twinkle with silvery lights... several hundred thousand silvery lights suddenly appeared in the cosmos.

At the City of Light Moon's giant observatory, the workers who were stationed there for 24 hours managed to discover at first notice. Using the AI, they immediately started analysing it, very soon, the analysis report was sent to the Barracks and just as they had predicted, the main force of this silver fleet indeed totalled up to around 1,700,000 spaceships!

The Barracks, who still initially held onto false hope, had their hopes dashed immediately and a thought suddenly appeared in many people, including Yao Yuan's, minds... space warp.

Space warp was humanity's trump card. It was a navigational technique even more advanced than wormhole and star gate. It wasn't guaranteed that it would be able to help humanity escape from a high tier space civilization though. After all, they had stumbled across a situation where a high tier space civilization had locked up a whole solar system before. But facing against a middle tier space civilization, it was an invincible presence.

However, this meant that they would have to abandon everything and it would be impossible for them to ever return to this place. The City of Light Moon, Homeward Planet, the New Solar System, they would all be memories from the past. It would be not unlike how they were forced to abandon Old Earth...

The fate was much too cruel...

Abandoning one's home once was a harrowing experience, abandoning it twice would be a sin, while abandoning it thrice

would break the human spirit into half!

Therefore, unless there was really no other choice, no one dared to bring up the possibility of leaving the New Solar System, not even Yao Yuan... Everyone knew the enemy was powerful, but since it was not a landslide disadvantage of facing a high tier space civilization, everyone was at least a little bit glad. Those who had not experienced the cosmos would never understand how deep the yearning for a home was; that desire oftentimes could be bigger than the need for survival. Therefore, if they really were to leave the New Solar System, unless Yao Yuan utilized his political power, quite possibly several thousand people would choose to stay behind...

After they received the confirmatory report, the atmosphere at the Barracks was dark and heavy. All the strategists were carrying out hypotheses, confirmations, and simulations using all the available data. This was the war of a level 3 space civilization. It was fought first on paper before any war erupted. The amount of data involved in the calculations was so huge that they had to rely on the AI.

"...Based on the current coordinates of both parties, if the enemy is determined to head towards the City of Light Moon, they would have to pass the firing zone of first and second defense lines. In fact, when they near the City of Light Moon, they will be within the firing range of third defense line as well. In other words, this fleet will be in an extremely disadvantageous situation!"

On the stage, a middle-aged strategist was giving a speech with the 3D image of the New Solar System behind him. As his speech continued, the image changed.

In fact, before building the New Solar System's defense circle, many Defense Unit majors were confused. After all, space war was not a flat surface war like it was back on Old Earth. Even in 21st century, when there was marine, air, and land warfare, the wars were still carried out in terms of a singular plane battlefield.

However, for a space war, the battlefield was truly three-dimensional. Up, down, left, right, front, back, there were six directions to worry about, and this was the reason why most soldiers were confused. In space wars, strategies like holding a fort wouldn't work because the enemy could just circle around the location and the supposed defense line was nothing more than a set of dead coordinates in space.

However, after using the AI to simulate the war, these soldiers finally understood the importance of the defense lines. One could say that a perfectly formed defense line would be enough to defend the attack from an enemy several hundred times its size!

However, the most key issue was the plasma weapons used by level 3 space civilizations. Even though there were many different kinds of plasma weapon, they shared a similarity: their bullets travelled at the speed of light. Therefore, unless they were Homo Evolutis who could sense danger, most of the normal lifeforms wouldn't be able to evade the attack. They would have to rely on energy shields. This was especially true for bigger spaceships.

Of course, one had to take into consideration the things called creator's particle and ECS system. With the combination of these two elements, one could practically appear "invisible" in space, and this would greatly decrease the accuracy of long distance attacks. However, while sniping was impossible, the spaceship would still be vulnerable to blanket fire. This was a level 3 space civilization, so the Genesis was no longer a tactical cannon but a general cannon. Combined with blanket firing of the more powerful Requiem and other plasma weapons, while the attack might not be as powerful as the booster-based energy weapons, it was not an attack that could be ignored by spaceships without a powerful enough energy shield.

In terms of shooting range, when one became a level 3 space civilization, a well-constructed defense line with weapons could have the firing range as far as one-third of a solar system. This

meant that a defense line's firing range would cover $\frac{1}{3}$ the size of the solar system. It would be difficult to circle around such a large firing circle. Furthermore, this was only one defense line, a solar system normally would have a wall of defense lines and their firing zone would overlap, thus creating a wall of security.

The last point was the lack of depth in space warfare. If one got shot in space, then the war was practically over; however, it was different for defense lines since they were mostly built on meteorites or asteroids. No matter whether it was built on the surface or underground, this was a natural advantage. Furthermore, the size of a defense base would normally be bigger than a spaceship, meaning they could store more energy cores and defense systems. Therefore, defense lines could be dubbed the indestructible spaceships. Unless it was surrounded by many spaceships or threatened by a civilization with a technological level much greater than their own, for level 3 space civilizations, defense lines were natural, indestructible spaceships!

It was one of the reasons why humanity selected to make this solar system their home.

As the strategist continued, the simulated silver fleet started moving. When the fleet was about 3 days away from first defense line, the first defense line started attacking. A great amount of Genesis and Requiem cannons fired at the enemy fleet.

"As we expected, the exhaustion of plasma shields is huge, the exhaustion quota is almost six times the energy employed by weapons of similar strength. This is related to the manipulation of plasma, shaping the energy into a circular form apparent eats up energy... In any case, our simulated result is that the first wave of fire will take about around 80 to 90 percent of the enemy frontline, but the damage caused by the second wave of fire will drop tremendously. Starting from the second wave, the damage caused by the first defense line will be less than one percent or lower, and it is the same for all the attacks after that...

"However, this situation will last for around 30 hours. According to our calculation, the maximum time a plasma reactor can hold up against our attack is 30 hours. After that, even for a level 3 space civilization, its stability will dramatically decrease and they will need repair and maintenance, or else there might be a threat of energy leakage. If they continue this for 50 hours, there will be a chance for short-circuit and internal explosions. If more than 70 hours, then its energy output will decrease by half. If by some miracle the enemy fleet still hasn't exploded, the weapons at the first defense line will be able to shoot through their weakened energy shield!

"And that is the purpose of a complete defense within the solar system! The first defense line will be the line of death for our enemy!"

After the strategist made his explanation, the 3D image disappeared and the faces of the majors present lightened up greatly. However, Guang Zhen asked darkly, "Then, according to the calculation from the strategist department... how long can first defense line keep up the attack of this strength?"

The strategist laughed bitterly before adding, "According to our data, first defense line can only support such an attack for... 16 days. After 16 days, be it the Genesis, Requiem, or normal cannons, all the weapons will stop working due to lack of energy, and the whole first defense line will be depleted of any energy storage..."

"In other words, after 16 days... the first defense line will fall..."

Chapter 444: Beginning!

While the simulation was going on, the second and last batch of civilians was getting on the spaceships at the first defense line.

This was a transport shuttle that hurried over from the second defense line. It was originally used to transport cargo, so it wasn't that comfortable for the passengers. However, comfort wasn't really a concern during war time. It carried on it about ten thousand people in one go. As the shuttle drifted towards the second defense line, the atmosphere at the space port was drawn...

Lee Yuan Fang looked his comrades' drawn faces and he felt the bad mood reflected within himself. This time almost all the civilians had been moved, including many of their families and children. This feeling of separation was truly grating.

"Captain Lee Yuan Fang, please report to the first defense line's central command immediately. Captain Lee Yuan Fang, please report to the first defense line's central command immediately."

Just as Lee Yuan Fang was lamenting the sadness, this voice suddenly appeared in his mini earmic. He didn't dare to dawdle and hopped onto a hovercraft to head towards central command. When he arrived, he realized that most of the majors and captains at the defense line were already there.

The Defense Unit still used the military ranking system utilized on old Earth. In increasing ranks: normal soldier, private, corporal, sergeant, sergeant first class, captain, major, general, and above general was commander. Currently, there was only one commander within the Defense Unit, and that was the leader, Guang Zhen.

The rank of captain was considered middle among the Defense Unit, while at the first defense line, the rank of captain was considered high because the leading commander at the base was merely a major. Therefore, Lee Yuan Fang as captain had to be

there whenever there was an important meeting.

"Lee Yuan Fang reporting for duty."

When Lee Yuan Fang saw the group of captains and majors sitting inside, he stood to attention immediately.

The one standing on stage was the first defense line's commanding officer, Major Warner. He was a soldier originally from old Earth. He was in his seventies but looked like a healthy middle-aged man. He nodded at Lee Yuan Fang before continuing, "We've just received the order from the City of Light Moon five minutes ago. The first defense line will enter the highest alert state after this batch of civilians depart from the base. No one will be allowed to leave the base alone unless it is on the order from the highest military body. The first defense line will initiate energy conservation systems to focus all our energy on operable weapons... This line of coordinates is our final war line. The moment our enemy crosses this line, we will start attacking!"

There was a small commotion in the room after that order was given. One of the captains raised his hand to ask, "Major, the number of the enemy's fleet has already surpassed the maximum number of enemies the first defense line can fight when it was designed. In fact, it is several thousand times over it. This kind of strategy..."

Warner shook his head. "The maximum number of enemies the first defense line can deal with is 400 spaceships the size of the Hope, guardian spaceships in the five digits, and battleships in the 15 digits. The moment, these numbers are surpassed, the first defense line will be completely wiped out. Yes, these numbers are close to my heart. The numbers are as such because these are normally the number of a space civilization's main fleet, but!

"We're facing an AI civilization. This kind of number is merely the tip of an iceberg for them. I know this is difficult, and this order might represent the highest honor available to a soldier..."

sacrifice!

"Let me remind everyone what is beyond this base! There is the transport shuttle that is carrying our families and friends! Then think about the second defense line! There are more than 200,000 civilians there, and half of them are children! Children below the age of 10! If we lose them, humanity would have lost everything! So there can be no buts or ifs!"

Warner said sternly, "This is an order! We are not allowed to take one step back! This is an order! I repeat, this is an order! Anyone who attempts to run, hide, or surrender will be personally shot down by me and I will report the name back to the City of Light Moon and have the Barracks announce to the whole civilization that these are the human traitors!"

"Of course..."

Warner's expression softened. "The Barracks hasn't abandoned us. The first spaceship fleet is heading our way as we speak. The order from the superiors is to hold the base for at least 15 days. After 15 days are over, we are allowed to retreat to the second defense line with the first fleet."

When this detail was revealed, everyone's expressions brightened. Of course they would follow the orders. They were soldiers, they would rather die than be branded human traitors. Furthermore, Warner was right. Their families and friends were just behind them, so they couldn't give up and allow these people to die. However, if one could survive, who would willingly choose death? After all, one needed to be alive to reunite with their families and friends.

"Now I will arrange the patrol area and the energy distribution system..."

As Warner said that, a shrill alarm sounded through central command. This was the alarm that signaled that they were under siege!

"At Earth time 10:27 AM, the unknown fleet started moving towards the first defense line. The fleet arrangement is as we can see on screen... the leading fleet contains 30,000 plus spaceships and the space between each spaceship is incredibly small, completely ignoring the normal navigational traditions of space travelling. They wandered into the firing range of the super long-distance weapons easily, but their intention is still unknown.

"At the same time, we have detected the travelling speed of this space fleet. Using the normal space travelling speed as constant, they are travelling at 4.2 times the speed of humanity's spaceships. This is the sign of an energy umbrella propeller. Initial detection puts this unknown fleet at level 3 or even higher technological level..."

When these messages appeared in the City of Light Moon, they were sent to the first and second defense lines at first notice. At the same time, all the defense weapons at the first defense line were active and armed.

Warner stood in the control room for one of the Requiem cannons. Beside him was Lee Yuan Fang, who was responsible over that particular cannon. Both of them looked at the mess of silvery dots on the screen and their hearts fell. The message from the City of Light Moon had casted a pall over the atmosphere at the first defense line.

4.2 times the speed of human spaceships? This meant that the enemy would only need one day to catch up to humanity, who had travelled for four days. Using this calculation, the unknown fleet would only need two days to reach the first defense line if they continued this speed... and would only need less than one day to pursue and slaughter the transport shuttle carrying the civilians...

How could they allow this to happen?!

"...Yuan Fang, what is your opinion of the Barracks' latest order?" Warner suddenly asked.

Lee Yuan Fang was startled before answering, "It is their last resort. Either all the previous surveillance data was all wrong or, more likely, we've been swindled. Our enemy's travelling speed is higher than any one of us has expected, the numbers are greater than we expected, and their technological level is greater than ours at least by two stages. This war... is an unwinnable one."

Warner nodded and continued bitterly, "The Barracks didn't mean to abandon us, but they can't save us anymore. The initial strategy wouldn't have worked, using the first defense line as the enemy's death line. That is possible only if we're on the same level as our enemy. In just two days, we'll be swallowed by this large, alien fleet.."

Both of them were silent. Suddenly, Warner pulled a pack of cigarettes out from his coat. He passed one to Lee Yuan Fang before lighting one himself. He took a deep breath and said, "I'm prepared to lay my life down here, but at least before I die, I need to see my family reach the second defense line safely. The size of the base there is at least 10 times this base and they have more than enough weapons to halt this fleet... at least enough to give our families enough time to retreat to the City of Light Moon."

Lee Yuan Fang was silent before adding, "That's not what I'm worried about the most... Perhaps we will die here and our families will safely reach the City of Light Moon, but... what's next? None of us will be able to leave the New Solar System. This... if I'm being frank, we're all sitting ducks waiting to be picked off. We Chinese have a saying: the people surviving but the land dying means that both survive; the people die but the land survives, both die. When there is a ray of hope, the sacrifice of the military is necessary to preserve the land, but when there is no hope in staying, it is better to leave with a smaller hope intact. That is my honest opinion."

Warner laughed. "All of us in the military know about this theory. However, the power is in the people. Many see this place as their home, so it depends on the Chancellor and whether his

influence is big enough to sway the public opinion..."

Suddenly, a soldier rushed in to report, "Captain, Major, there is a new message from the City of Light Moon. Halt all progress on Kun Lun and reactivate the sleeping Hope. All the civilians are ordered to file into the Hope and all the other same-size spaceships..."

"The moment everyone reaches home base, space warp will be initiated immediately!"

Chapter 445: Cannon Fire!

Another space warp...

This message caused a serious commotion among all those who lived at the City of Light Moon. Everyone from all walks of life, Black Star Troopers, Defense Unit soldiers, normal citizens, teachers, students, scientists, engineers, were discussing this latest order by the human government. This was an order Yao Yuan had used his power as the Chancellor to make, and this was the first time Yao Yuan had used this power that was written into the constitution.

"...the Chancellor has the right to issue any command in any situation that could threaten the survivability of humanity. This command ranges from defense, sacrifice, escape, and even self-destruction. This command is at the highest chain of command, and other than the Chancellor him or herself, no one else is allowed to deny this order!"

This was the first law that was written into the constitution when the human government was first formed. In fact, the many powers and responsibilities of the Chancellor were extensions of this law. However, since humanity was a civilization that left old Earth and was submerged in the thought process of democracy for millennia, there were plenty of limitations to this law. This was especially true after humanity entered the New Solar System. There were six pending changes to the constitution, and they were all surreptitiously targeting this issue of the Chancellor having too much power.

Of course, humanity's Chancellor was Yao Yuan. He was the biggest hero humanity had ever seen, he had led humanity for almost 30 years since they escaped the catastrophe on Earth. In these 30 years, he had shown no signs of being corrupted by power. His government was transparent and was kind to everyone. That combined with his willingness to expand the power of the people

during peaceful times meant that the general public was willing to hand him absolute power.

And now Yao Yuan was going to use this highest power the public had given him as the Chancellor!

Back at the first defense line, the first bell of war had been rung. The speed of their enemy fleet was incredibly fast; they had reached the first defense line's final warning zone in less than a day. Then the Genesis, Requiem, and the only weapon that came from a level 3 space civilization, one that was personally designed by Bo Li...

Energy Storm!

Its firing range was one-third the solar system. Its concept was not the simple plasma weapon of level 3 space civilizations, not energy expansion, but energy coagulation. The Energy Storm's design ideal was similar to the design ideal of the weapons for peak level 3 space civilizations. It was a manifestation of super energy coagulation technology.

It was a technology that collected energy within a unit of space to form something like a light ball before firing. When it arrived at its destination, it would lose the binding force on it, causing a great explosion. The damage and coagulation technology was related to energy technology. In fact, in the simulation, when this weapon's coagulation technology reached its maximum, one shot could evaporate the sun. Of course, this was something unimaginable by level 3 or even level 4 space civilization...

This energy weapon was named Energy Storm, and it was humanity's biggest trump card, or rather, the trump card that they could use.

As all the weapons at the first defense line roared, several large pillars of light fired in unison. Behind them were several conspicuously bright laser beams. Their brightness was such that they couldn't be viewed by the naked eye alone. Like looking at the

sun, one's eyes would be blinded and might go blind if exposed to it for too long.

Behind these two different rays of light was an inconspicuous light orb. It looked small, barely 100 meters in size. In fact, for this weapon, the smaller the ball, the greater the damage. If the ball was the size of a needle, then the power would be great enough to blow up even a dark hole.

These three weapons were the long distance weapons currently in humanity's arsenal. They were the Defense Unit's specialty. The Genesis could fire every 30 minutes, Requiem one shot every two hours, while Energy Storm... one shot every eight hours. Therefore, it was in a way lucky that the alien fleet was moving towards humanity in a group, because if they moved separately, the damage of these weapons wouldn't be so pronounced.

"Move! Get maintenance here immediately! Energy team, start energy light-fractal analysis now! Reactor team, get on with the checking! Everyone move! We're racing against time here!"

"Yes, Sir!"

This kind of shouting could be heard everywhere at the first defense line. All the Defense Unit soldiers were busy conducting their work. They were now the people fighting at humanity's frontline, and behind them were their families who had just left the first defense line one day ago. If they couldn't stop the enemy... the transport shuttle didn't even have a self-destruct option; therefore, they had to block the enemy's passage!

All the long-distance weapons shot at the enemy at light speed, so the enemy was unable to detect their presence. Under normal circumstances, a space civilization above level 3 would have superlight speed surveillance technology, and that would be able to tip them off to incoming light ray attacks. However, during the time of war, and when creator's particle covered the whole battlefield, such surveillance techniques would be indisposed. Of

course, unless the creator's particle was removed; however, if one did that, the accuracy of enemy fire would greatly improve and ECS system and the like would be down, which would only lead to a greater problem.

Therefore, unless they were directly hit, the enemy fleet wouldn't know that they had been targeted.

Currently, the enemy fleet was 3,600 light seconds away from the first defense line. In other words, they would need one hour to reach their destination if they were travelling at light speed. The damage report of this first round of fire would be ready after two hours.

In reality, the energy umbrella technology that humanity had could reach up to 1.4 percent light speed, and the speed of the unknown fleet was 5 percent light speed. Theoretically speaking, they had reached the maximum potential of the energy umbrella propeller. This was a sign that they were a peak level 3 space civilization, and this was the reason why Yao Yuan ordered to initiate another space warp.

After the first round of firing, all the soldiers at the first defense line started moving. Almost all the cannons had shortened their expected firing times by 5 to 10 minutes. Two hours later, the first defense line was ready to fire another round of Requiem and Genesis shots...

However, before everyone's eyes, several exploding weak globes of light appeared in space. Some of them glowed brighter than the others. This was the result of the reactors exploding after being shot by the cannons. This observation made the soldiers at the first defense line cheer and the fatigue from the two hours of non-stop work fell off them easily.

Using the data analysis of AI and the latest photographic telescope, the result of the first round of firing was out within 20 minutes and was issued to the City of Light Moon at first notice.

At the city's military central command, all the officers were turned towards the entrance, waiting for the new report to arrive. When the report arrived, a 3D image immediately appeared at the center of the room.

In this 3D image, several large light beams shot towards a spot in space. The place that they shaved through caused a series of explosions. However, that was only at the beginning. As the light beams travelled deeper, the number of explosions decreased.

"That's so unfortunate, we missed! If the accuracy was slightly better, this shot could have taken down at least 10,000 spaceships!" One of the majors slammed his fist on the table and groused.

The major-ranked strategist beside him laughed bitterly. "The enemy is within the creator's particle range and is in ECS state, so our attacks are at best educated guesses. The fact that we managed to land one hit is lucky enough."

Everyone else nodded slightly. This was how it was in a space war. The cannon fire on the 3D image was still carrying on. The cannon fire by the Genesis was followed by the light beam of the Requiem. To everyone's surprise, when the light beams reached their destination, they started to distort and spread across the whole battlefield. Initially, nothing happened, but when they swept a particular corner of space, a series of explosions occurred. The rate of explosions was even bigger than the ones caused by Genesis.

"It is as we expected! The cannon fire of the Requiem can twist in direction, making it perfect for wide area attacks!"

There was a clear excitement in the room when the 100 meter globe of light reached the space and a bright light swallowed up the whole area. As the light dissipated, many explosions detonated, causing the wide expanse to light up like an expanse of stars...

"The analysis result is out. The first round of cannon fire managed to take down around 14,000 battleships and 3,000 main

spaceships. The rest of the result is still in calculation..."

At the same time, a soldier suddenly rushed in to say, "Report. The the first defense line is currently under cannon fire!"

Chapter 446: Swallowed...

The first defense line was bombarded for a consecutive six hours. In that period of time, the first defense line retaliated with 13 shots of Genesis, three shots of Requiem, and even one shot of Energy Storm.

It was then that the benefit of owning a base was truly exemplified.

In truth, the reason spaceships like battleships were weaker was due to the overall environment of space. The vacuum, the super low temperature, and air pressure meant that a small bit of damage at a strategic location could cause the spaceship to explode in space. In contrast, be it superelectromagnetic weapons or plasma weapons, the damage they could deal against buildings and objects was limited. At least the damage wouldn't be as powerful as a nuclear bomb.

To borrow an analogy, if a meteorite was hurtling towards Earth, it only needed to be the size of 10 kilometers to wipe out more than 90 percent of living things on Earth. Just how small was 10 kilometers? Earth's diameter was 12,000 kilometers, and in comparison, 10 kilometers was as small as a piece of sesame. However, that piece of sesame could wipe out 90 percent of living things on Earth.

However, if one needed to destroy a space mass the size of Earth, even with this large fleet of several hundred thousand, it would require upwards of several ten thousand years. Even level 4 or 5 space civilizations wouldn't be able to do that, much less a level 3 space civilization. Destroying a planet and wiping out its populace were two different things.

Therefore, the first defense line that was built around a meteorite belt was far sturdier than the fleet expected. After a focus fire of a cannon ten times the strength of the Genesis, while

first defense line didn't escape unscathed, the important points were completely unharmed. There was only one notable damage. A Genesis cannon that was located quite far for the rest had been shot down by the enemy. It needed emergency repairs before it could be used again.

However, everyone at the first defense line was worried because this first wave of cannon fire had cleared the row of meteorites at the outermost ring of the first defense line. Many smaller meteorites were evaporated. In other words, the first defense line's outer layer of defense was taken down and the next wave of attack would hit the base directly.

Lee Yuan Fang was patrolling, examining the situation all over first defense line. He was a captain, and this was rank considered high at first defense line, so along the way, many people saluted him. While he saluted in return, it was done in a hurry and it was the same for those who saluted him, their concern wasn't on something as frivolous as saluting.

"...We're in the creator's particles' range, so our communication with the outside world has been cut off..."

Lee Yuan Fang was passing a group of soldiers when he heard this conversation. With a stern face, he shouted, "What are you talking about!? Why don't you share it with me as well?!"

The group of soldiers was flustered, but they immediately calmed down. The leading African American soldier immediately saluted and said, "Captain Lee, we're merely discussing how long we can hold this alien fleet off!"

When Lee Yuan Fang saw the soldier, he was shocked. It was Private Tom. He was a space baby and Lee Yuan Fang's neighbor. He was married to a woman from old Earth; their age difference was more than 20 years old. Disregarding the voices of dissent from both families, they ended up together. Their union even caused a ripple among human society, discussing how the age

extending technology had unsettled the normal human perspective on marriage and social values.

Lee Yuan Fang's wife and Tom's wife were like sisters, and throughout his wife, Lee Yuan Fang knew Tom.

"Okay," Lee Yuan Fang said, "how long do you think we can hold them off."

Tom was a university student who went through the new education system, and in terms of general knowledge, he was much more intuitive than people from old Earth like Lee Yuan Fang. He said seriously, "Captain, from our current data, we won't be able to hold them off for the 15 days that the military wanted... That is impossible. Actually, to be able to hold them off for five days is already a miracle. My personal estimate is... maximum three days, we can hold on for a maximum of three days."

Lee Yuan Fang nodded and joined the group of soldiers. "Tell me what you think."

The group of soldiers looked at each other and the young Asian soldier said, "Captain, from the intensity of the cannon fire, we know that the size of this fleet is huge. We have managed to survive through elements like greater dispersion among the enemy fleet and the lack of accuracy... However, if the enemy's fleet reaches here and starts attacking at close-distance, our energy shield will have to defend against attack power that is ten times the damage we're suffering right now. According to our energy analysis and energy output per unit time... at most two days and our energy shield will be broken. Then we'll be exposed. When that happens, in just one day..."

Everyone was silent, including Lee Yuan Fang. Suddenly, Tom asked, "Captain Yuan Fang, what is your opinion?"

Lee Yuan Fang laughed bitterly. "The situation is not far off from your analyses and predictions... Yes, we might not survive for longer than three days, but..."

Lee Yuan Fang's voice got louder, attracting the attention of the nearby soldiers. Slowly, more and more soldiers gathered until it was a small gathering of several hundred people. and he announced, "But! We have to hold on for these three days even if we have to die defending it!

"I believe many people are already discussing how we're the abandoned chess pieces of this war, right? I believe many people have trouble sleeping and eating because they've started counting down their days, right? Fine! Then have you ever calculated how many hours it has been since that transport shuttle that carried our families left?

"Let me tell you! 10 hours! It has left merely ten hours ago! It will need at least five days to cover the distance between here and the second defense line, and our enemy's fleet speed is four times our speed! Four times! Do you understand what that means? In three days, the shuttle will have been gone for three and a half days already. But before it reaches the second defense line, this enemy fleet can still depart from this place and destroy it with some time to spare!

"And let me tell you who is on that transport shuttle... there are 14,000 civilians, and 9,000 of them are children! 9,000 children! Those are your children, his children, my children, our children! Those are humanity's future, our hope! 9,000 children! Don't tell me you want to let those 9,000 children perish in space?! Who dares to admit to that? I will personally tear him apart! If anything happens to those children, even the Chancellor will be questioned and even pressured to surrender his post, much less us!

"Yes, we might only survive for three days! But in these three days, we have to fight until the last second! This might be a death order, but I have to ask you to ask yourselves with your hands over your hearts: when your wives and children departed from this place, what did your hearts say?"

Lee Yuan Fang pulled off the buttons on his army fatigue, pointed

at his chest, and said, "I've asked myself exactly that, and this is my answer... I am willing to put this life on the line here. I, Lee Yuan Fang, have a wife and two children. My son, Lee Xia Ya, is only nine and my daughter, Lee Sai Na, is seven. I want them to grow up safely, I want them to see for themselves the continued advancement of human civilization, I want them to feel proud for being a human, I want them to experience the joy that I have experienced living among humans, and working proudly for the human society, so...

"I, Lee Yuan Fang, will die here willingly! I will fight proudly for three days and die here when the time comes!

"If my death will preserve the glory of humanity, then I welcome death with open arms!"

Moments later, at the first defense line's central command, Warner told Lee Yuan Fang, "Wonderful speech, Captain."

"No, Lieutenant." There was a glowing conviction in Lee Yuan Fang's eyes as he said, "That is not a speech, it is how I really feel. For my wife and children's happiness and future, I will gladly lay down my life."

"...Indeed." Warner turned around to look at the picture frame on his table and he smiled gently. "Happiness is worth defending with our lives. I agree with you, Captain Lee Yuan Fang..."

"Do you know my wife passed away quite early, leaving me a trouble-seeking daughter? When we were on old Earth, my daughter got embroiled with a crowd of druggies, but after she came onto the Hope, she turned over a new leaf. She started going to classes and later was very hardworking at her job. She found herself a man at work and they fell in love and got married. Now I'm a proud grandfather of six cute grandchildren..."

"I'm happy, really happy. Working for this government not to suppress the people or to fight another country but to protect the safety of humanity... After retirement, I plan to buy a big plot of

land on Homeward Planet and retire to become a farmer. I wish to rear a Black Dragon and bring him hunting and fishing every weekend. When winter comes, I'll curl around the fireplace with a good book and fall asleep...

"Wouldn't that be the life? And I would do everything, including lay down my life, to give others an opportunity at happiness like that!"

79 hours later, the first defense line fell and there were zero survivors. When the alien fleet landed on the base, the soldiers used their flesh and blood to block the progress of the robot soldiers until the whole base was swamped by the large fleet...

The first defense line brought down 12,7000 enemy spaceships and held them off for almost 10 hours more than the time predicted by the AI!

The transport shuttle was 35 hours away from the second defense line...

And inside the shuttle, a woman suddenly collapsed in tears, hugging her son and daughter, crying like a baby...

Chapter 447: Bros!

"F*ck, f*ck, f*ck..."

Wang Hwa was pacing up and down the second defense line, cursing to himself. His face was so dark that it seemed like he was going to tear someone open soon.

Wang Hwa was part of the Black Star Unit, he was part of Yao Yuan's original Special Ops group. He had been through many life and death situations in space and he was also an S-grade Perceptor. He was on special order to stay back at the second defense line, one of the few Homo Evolutis who wasn't called back to the City of Light Moon.

Wang Hwa had a feisty personality, or rather he was a typical soldier. His best friend among the Black Star Unit was Ebon because they shared similar personalities. However, Wang Hwa was slightly better than Ebon because at least he could be reasoned with somewhat.

At this moment, Wang Hwa was in his berserk state. He paced around the base, but alas the number of Black Star troopers who remained to defend this base was pitifully small. Including him, there were only three Black Star Troopers, 140 training soldiers, and 200 Defense Unit soldiers. That was all, and he had to find another Black Star Unit member to vent his frustration.

"What kind of f*cking order is this!? Why can't we go to the frontline and fight? F*ck, we have to sit tight and watch the first defense line fall? What kind of f*cking order is this? Has Ol' Captain been corrupted by the power of Chancellor? Is he emulating Gandhi's no-fighting, peaceful resistance?"

Wang Hwa mocked without filter, but the two Black Star troopers beside him were sweating bullets because if Wang Hwa's words were heard by Yao Yuan... even though the human government didn't have any libel laws, he was slandering Yao

Yuan's name, the veritable human hero.

Wang Hwa glanced at the two troopers out of the corner of his eye. "What are you two so afraid of?! If Ol' Captain wishes to kill me because of my complaints, then so be it! I do wish to see whether he has been corrupted or not!"

At the point, Wang Hwa was overwhelmed by his own anger. He lobbed the hand grips in his grasp into the air and growled loudly as he sat back down into his seat. He was so still that the two troopers thought he had died from aneurysm or something.

"Ol' Captain... he is a good man. He has always been like this, shouldering everyone's burden on his own shoulders like it is his natural responsibility to do so. That is just crazy! Doesn't he know there are already too many responsibilities on his shoulders? The greatest human hero, the human savior, the only Immortal in space, the legend who will lead humanity to its peak... at the end of the day, he is just a normal man! Those bastards at the City of Light Moon, those representatives, haven't they been calling for more human freedom and more human rights, more limitations on the military, the Chancellor's power, Black Star Troopers? They have been calling for all those limitations because according to them, those are the voices of the people, so where are they now? Why aren't they relaying the voices of the people at this moment? They're all silent like ostriches and pushing all the responsibility onto the Ol' Captain! At this point, they have all....

"Abandoned the Ol' Captain!"

Wang Hwa suddenly stood up as he continued, "Any sane person knows we can no longer hold back a fleet this size, at least not with humanity's current power, but no one dares to bring up space warp, so Ol' Captain had no choice... but this is not the end, at least for me. This is not the end...

"I may not have the power to sway the government, I may not have the power to influence the people, I may not have the power

to argue with those representatives... but I have the power to decide my own life!"

Wang Hwa suddenly smiled and said, "Hey, bros, don't you think... our friends at the first defense line are too lonely? Swallowed like that by a cold, mechanical fleet, they... their souls and flesh could only freeze in that moment, while we, their families and friends, will warp away, leaving this place where they put their lives to rest. Won't they be lonely?"

"So, how about this, bros... let's go set up a large fireworks show for these brave souls, to tell them that... we're still here and we're still fighting!"

"Let them know that... it is not the Chancellor's intention to give up on them. The Chancellor... was forced to do so!"

"Let's go, bros!"

At the same time, in the second defense line's central command, Jacko was in deep discussion with several others members who looked after the base, consoling them, telling them that in the next eight hours, the civilians from the first defense line would reach their base, and that in at most three days, the New Solar System first fleet will arrive at the second defense line. Then they could all retreat to the City of Light Moon.

"The second defense line is large and this meteorite we're on is at least one-third the size of the Light Moon. It is practically indestructible. The first defense line held on for five days, so by that calculation, we can hold them back for at least 50 days. In fact, we might be able to completely eliminate our enemies here, so I wish for everyone to stop panicking and please return to your own areas to comfort and console your people. We're in martial law, so please tell them not to do anything that violates the military law due to their emotions..."

After Jacko sent away this group of civilian representatives, before he could catch a breath, another report came in.

"Commander, the first defense line's civilian shuttle will reach second defense line in 7 hours and 42 minutes; however, right behind him is the robot fleet. Using the creator's particle zone as analysis, it will catch up to the shuttle in at most 8 hours, and after catching up, it'll reach the second defense line in another 10 minutes.

"The robot fleet is already within our cannon's firing range, so Commander, shall we fire..."

Jacko was silent for a moment before asking, "What is the simulation result? If we fire, what will happen to the civilian shuttle?"

The person silently pulled out another report and said, "If we conduct a long-distance cannon fire, the AI fleet will immediately counter-attack. According to the fleet numbers and cannon trajectory... the civilian fleet is in the trajectory, so..."

"It will be shot down, right?" Jacko accepted the report and concluded, "There will be no firing of cannons, send out the order. Continue the surveillance on the robot fleet..."

The person with the report was a lieutenant. He glanced at Jacko before adding, "But before the creator's particle was released, the last order from the City of Light Moon was to do everything we can to stop the enemy... If we wait until the enemy fleet gets too close, then this order..."

"Then, what do you want me to do?!" Jacko suddenly grabbed the lieutenant's collar and roared angrily, "You want me to order for the death of 14,000 civilians? You want me to watch 9,000 children die? You want me to cause the death of these people whom our comrades at the first defense line lay down their lives to protect? What do you expect me to do!? Tell me, Lieutenant! You want me to trample on the lives of these heroes from first defense line?! Tell me!"

After a long time, Jacko finally released the collar of this soldier.

However, the lieutenant still held his gaze calmly and said, "Yes, Commander, I know this is inhumane of me to say, but if I was in your position, I would order to fire the cannons... because we have 10 times more civilians in this base! Our own families are here! We need to buy them more time to get back to the City of Light Moon. If you want to save these 14,000 people... then what about our own families? Sir! What about our own flesh and blood, including your wife and children!"

Jacko's face was white. His hands gripped tightly, but he stood there, completely unmoving. He didn't know who to blame, or rather, he was at a loss because this lieutenant had a point because his order could cause 10 times more sacrifices, but...

How could he give the order to fire when the souls of the heroes at the first defense line were still watching!?

Just as the whole central command turned to Jacko waiting for his command, suddenly, another soldier shot into the room yelling, "Re, report! The guardian spaceship that belongs to the Black Star Troopers has left the base and it is carrying with it a sealed box!"

"Black Star Troopers?!"

"We have Black Star Troopers on this base?!"

The atmosphere in the central command suddenly rose, but Jacko's heart fell because he was the only one who knew the so-called Black Star Troopers only had three members, and that sealed box... carried a Steel Nall!

At the same time, outside of the second defense line's orbit, a guardian spaceship was getting further and further from the base. There was in total 180 plus people on the ship, including three Black Star Troopers, 60 general workers, and 100 plus Defense Unit soldiers.

Wang Hwa sat in the captain's car and roared, "Bros, we're..."

"Coming!"

Chapter 448: Tears and Fireworks

"I'm telling you all now, I'm his boss from now on! If any one of you dares to bully him again, I will break your arms and legs!"

At the back of the school compound, a big bloke about 1.8 meters was smirking looking at a group of five to six high schoolers lying on the floor. Several other students were looking their way with their legs shaking. Behind this big bloke was a gentle and weak-looking bespectacled guy with a shaved head, wiping the blood coming out of his nose.

The big bloke seemed to be in quite a mood and pulled a guy off the ground and growled, "Wang Dog, what did I tell you last time?"

The student by the name of Wang Dog (?) might've looked malevolent on the surface, but at that moment, he was as docile as a dog. With a shaking voice, he said, "Brother, Brother Wang, I remember your warning, but this time it was this guy's fault, and it was him who came over to us to pay us protection fee, asking us to protect him in the future. However, two days later, he went around telling others that we forced the money out of him and told everyone we're just a random group of ruffians and are nothing compared to the real gang of people that watches over him. We could not allow him to continue spreading such nasty rumors, so we..."

The big bloke didn't waste time and slapped the words out of the student's mouth. "Stop making up stories to distract me. I told you, if any one of you comes to this school again, I would beat one if I see one. Did you think I was joking? Today, since all of you dared to come in again, I'll make sure all of you crawl out on your knees!"

The face of this Wang Dog turned white, yellow, and finally black. At long last, he squeezed out this sentence. "Wang Hwa, if you dare to do that, don't blame us when our boss comes to seek revenge. Our boss is not someone you can deal with..."

Before he could finish, a punch came right at his face and the words dovetailed into a blood-curdling scream. Two of his front teeth were punched loose and his face was a mess...

Wang Hwa, a high school bully from XX High School. While he was only 15, he was already 1.8 meters tall. That combined with his bear-like body and triangular eyes gave him the impression that he was a killer. The teachers as well as the students wouldn't dare to hold his gaze for more than five seconds, and he was labelled a "hopeless student" at school. Homework, self-study, and morning exercises had nothing to do with him, and cheating during exams, coming late to school, and playing truancy were his daily life.

However, this student, unbeknownst to most students and teachers of his school, had conquered the land around 10 kilometers of his school. Be it mugging, extortion or blackmail, no one dared to do those near this school, and the school was even thus nominated by the local government to be the best local school...

15 years old was the age where a student knew the importance of numbers because it was the age of school exams. The difference in one number could cause the difference in the school that they could apply to, and this... was not something that could be solved using punches.

Wang Hwa stared with wide eyes at the math textbook, but he had no idea what he was reading. After a long time, he slapped himself on the back of his head before walking to a bespectacled boy who busy studying. The boy was the model student who he had just saved a few days ago.

"Bro, help me explain this formula. What in the world is happening? How come suddenly this number will turn to this number?" Wang Hwa chuckled as he slapped the boy intimately on his shoulder.

The boy first had condescension flash across his eyes before

quickly piling the smiles. "Brother Wang, of course I'll explain it to you... By the way, Brother Wang, I still haven't thanked you for the incident earlier."

Wang Hwa laughed and replied with ease, "Why are you bringing that old thing up? It's no biggie..." Before he finished, the bespectacled boy suddenly pulled out a real leather wallet from his shirt and pretended to count the money inside before pulling out three 100 RMB notes and passing them to Wang Hwa with a smile.

Wang Hwa continued to smile before the smile gradually froze until it was a serious face that was looking at the boy.

The boy was startled and immediately forced a laugh. "Right, right, this is my mistake. How could Brother Wang take the same amount of money as those ruffians? This is my fault." Then he pulled another two notes from his wallet and offered them to Wang Hwa. The smile on his face looked fake, but there was a smugness in the boy's eyes.

Wang Hwa's punch swiped the five bank notes and attached them right on the boy's face, cracking his spectacles and teeth...

"You're truly a disappointed. Your mother went through three days of pain to give birth to you and wasted her last breath to feed you, but you have grown up to become a school bully that extorts other students for their money? Where do you have the face to face your mother? Get down on your knees! You bastard son, get down on your knees..."

"...Juvi? Of course a bastard like yourself will end up in juvi; you bullied your little brother just yesterday, didn't you? Doesn't his mother treat you well? Even though she's your stepmom, no one in this village has anything bad to say about her unconditional love towards you, but you don't seem to appreciate it. Fine, go to juvi then!"

"Go to university? Who do you think you are? You think we have the money for you to go to university? Even if we did, you think

you could graduate? Go out to get a job! Your brother is the genius in his household, he will be the one that will go to university. Take a look at yourself; who do you think you are?"

"...Join the military? Your physique is meant to join the military after all..."

Wang Hwa sat in the captain's chair, looking at the 3D image of the space around the spaceship, but his thoughts had returned to decades ago, to his high school years, juvi years, and later army days. The good, bad, fussy, pronounced memories surrounded him.

Wang Hwa looked at the people around him. The two Black Star Troopers were similar to him in the sense that they also came from Old Earth. They were loyal, brave and were every bit a soldier as he was. They were truly humanity's guardians.

Then came the general workers and Defense Unit soldiers.... They were just normal people, not Homo Evolutis. They did not have superpowers in space wars, and when facing such a large fleet of energy, they didn't even have the power to save themselves. They... had already prepared to sacrifice themselves.

Then again... so were himself and the two Black Star Troopers. Even though they were Homo Evolutis, on a battlefield of this scale, it was as he said, they were only enough to create a large scale fireworks display.

Actually... he didn't need to do this. The Black Star Troopers only answered to Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor. Even the military didn't have the right to order them. Jacko, who was a major, was actually one rank lower than him, so he didn't have the power to order them to attack, but...

But these were the children!

Wang Hwa had a soft spot for children. He liked hanging out with them, because he loved seeing the smiles on their faces. Other

than that, Wang Hwa had extreme respect for the academicians. Among the Black Star Troopers, he was the person who respected the Academy the most. Furthermore, he was studious even though that didn't reflect in his results. He was one of the few among the Black Star Troopers to volunteer to take the university entrance test... even though he failed every time...

He enjoyed watching society improve and every child get treated the best they could. Furthermore, due to the interaction between western and eastern styles of education, the type of eastern education where the child was put down was dropped in favor of the western style education that propped up the children. Every child was given the opportunity to go to school and enter university, and juvi was no longer a thing!

Therefore, Wang Hwa's favorite thing to do on the City of Light Moon was to visit the schools. Whenever he saw the smiles of children, his heart warmed and it gave him a happy feeling...

Yes, he was happy!

And now, that damnable fleet was coming to destroy this happiness. Right before them, there were 9,000 children's lives who were being threatened, and there were more children behind them on the second defense line...

He would do everything to protect them!

Suddenly, a pilot interrupted Wang Hwa's thought. "Captain, we're entering the transport shuttle's creator's particle zone. Very soon we'll enter its free zone and be able to communicate with them."

Wang Hwa came to and replied, "Communicate with the shuttle and have the leader broadcast our conversation to the entire shuttle."

Just like that, five minutes later, the two ships met each other. After a few words of conversation, Wang Hwa's face appeared at

every corner of the ship and everyone on the shuttle could see him.

"Hello, how are the little ones doing? Hi, my name is Wang Hwa and I'm a Black Star Trooper! I've brought along my unit to protect all of you!"

Wang Hwa concluded his short speech with a guffaw. After he said those words, the shuttle was stunned. However, that quickly turned into cheers. This was a Black Star Trooper unit! The Black Star Troopers had arrived!

From who knew when, the Black Star Troopers had become something of a superhero unit among humanity. Movies using them as the heroes appeared like mushrooms after spring rain. That combined with the government advertisements, the image of the Black Star Troopers achieved a godlike status among the people. They were invincible, loyal, brave, and they were the staunchest defenders of humanity!

The appearance of a Black Star Trooper unit dispersed the shuttle's anxiety instantly. The feeling of relaxation and ease they felt couldn't be described with words. Many people started tearing up... perhaps because they were reminded of their husbands or sons at the first defense line...

A woman suddenly collapsed hugging her own son and daughter. Her son, Lee Xia Ya, wiped away his mother's tears and asked, "Mom, what's wrong... This man is a Black Star Trooper? He's going to help daddy?"

The woman smudged the tears on her face and said, "Yes, he... and his friends are going to help your parents." As she said so, her tears became even fiercer.

Lee Xia Ya's face, though, was glowing. With stars in his eyes, he said, "This man... is so handsome! Black Star Troopers are so handsome! I also want to become a Black Star Trooper in the future! Mom, I also want to be a Black Star Trooper!"

The woman ruffled the boy's hair gently and said softly, "Okay, Xia Ya... will be the strongest Black Star Trooper."

"Yes, I'll be the strongest Black Star Trooper!" Lee Xia Ya looked at the screen with his eyes glowing until the image of the guffawing man disappeared...

After the spaceships parted, Wang Hwa stood up and got into his space armor. Of course, this was merely a ritual, as this was a battle that had no use for space armor.

"Open up the sealed box!"

Wang Hwa ordered the workers. With the aid of a few AI robots, the large container was peeled open. Inside it sat a spherical, pure silvery white ball-like object. It was about 15 meters in diameter. This was no longer the first prototype. After 10 years of retouching by Bo Li, this was the latest prototype.

This steel ball was Steel Ball Progressive Prototype Two. It was created by Bo Li using Wang Hwa's body capability and Homo Evolutis power. It was, in other words, custom-made for Wang Hwa.

Beside Wang Hwa, the two Black Star Troopers had stepped into their own Space Combat Jets while Wang Hwa raised his hands and told everyone there severely, "Comrades, every friend on this space... I'm not one for inciting speeches, so... I only have one thing to say..."

Wang Hwa saluted them and walked into the Steel Ball saying, "Let us meet again at the Hall of Remembrance!"

Four hours later, the transport shuttle arrived at the second defense line. The first thing they did was inform the people about how the Black Star Troopers had shielded their retreat, which was met with lowered gazes and silence by the people at the second defense line...

The Space Combat Jets, the guardian spaceship, and the silver

ball created a large fireworks show in space. They blocked the enemy's progress for three hours. 10 minutes after the battle began, the guardian spaceship was shot down by the large fleet. 1 hour and 15 minutes later, the two space combat jets exploded one after another. Three hours and twenty minutes later, the steel ball that had been moving around the battlefield suddenly stopped moving and ten seconds later exploded in space...

When the second the transport shuttle arrived at second defense line, the cannons at the base roared at once, adding colors to the fireworks that were still erupting in space...

At the second defense line, Lee Xia Ya, who was watching the fireworks through the public television, had his tears fall from his face and shatter into pieces as they hit the floor...

Chapter 449: The Light of Hope and Fever?

Back in the City of Light Moon...

Yao Yuan, Guang Zhen, Bo Li, Ren Tao, and several scientists as well as strategists were reviewing the long distance surveillance images of the first defense line and the combat video of Wang Hwa's Black Star Trooper unit.

Everyone was silent until the video was repeated the third time, where Yao Yuan called for quits. With a darkened face, he said, "As everyone can see, the second defense line has continued firing for 14 hours already, the first defense line has been taken down, and the pieces of Steel Ball have been collected by the unknown fleet. This confirms that Wang Hwa's unit has sacrificed themselves...."

"Based on what we've watched, I want to hear your opinions." Yao Yuan addressed the room.

The room became silent once more. After some time, Guang Zhen said darkly, "This fleet's military prowess is not weaker than us humans'. No, from their energy shields, they seem to be even more powerful than we are. Furthermore, their fleet is unimaginably big. We can see from the videos that even though the size of the cannons at the second defense line are 10 times the size of the cannons at first defense line, based on the observable data, our enemy has lost less than 5,000 spaceships. Without the initial element of surprise, now our enemy is really exhibiting their prowess as a level 3 space civilization."

Yao Yuan nodded and asked, "Yes, that's right, but other than that?"

A strategist said, "The combat prowess of the Steel Ball is better than expected, especially the special weapons attached to it. The Explosive Arrow Bullets have the capability of shattering energy shields at close distance. The fact that one Steel Ball can destroy 4,000 plus spaceships in three hours is very impressive. If we had

more than 100 Steel Balls, then we could win this war easily..."

"100 Steel Balls?" Yao Yuan chuckled self-deprecatingly. "I guess that's one way to look at it. Anything else?"

Suddenly, Ren Tao raised his voice to say, "They... they seem to be looking for something."

Yao Yuan's eyes glowed and he added hurriedly, "Why do you say so? Explain."

Ren Tao contemplated for a bit before adding, "There are three weird observations. First, at the first defense line, even though they retaliated with intense cannon fire, it is observable that they still held some kind of reservation. Even though I don't understand why, the reality told us that they seemed to be unnecessarily guarded about something. However, that confusion was answered when the robots landed inside first defense line. Suddenly, a thought came to me... they're looking for something?"

"Looking for what?"

When Ren Tao said that, the room was confused, and they reviewed the videos again. After a while, they came to the same conclusion. The robot fleet didn't need to even land on first defense line. They had the overwhelming advantage, and the first defense line's energy shield had been taken down, so there was no reason for them to risk landing. This was out of place for an AI civilization.

"If this was a normal alien civilization, then perhaps this could be explained by their need to collect lifeforms to farm soul, but there is no need for that for an AI civilization because they have no use for soul, so this action of theirs is very strange."

At this point, Yao Yuan was suddenly reminded of Intel, the sentient AI born within the human civilization... His real identity was a sentient intelligence, the key to the breakthrough of machine singularity... Could it be...

Here, Xiao Niao picked up where Ren Tao left off. "Yes, I too have discovered that anomaly. It was hinted at during the landing of first defense line and was confirmed when they fought Major Wang Hwa. The enemy fleet was indeed looking for something, but they didn't seem to know what kind of thing it was or where it was. It was probably why they were held up by Major Wang Hwa for three hours, because they were trying to detain him alive."

After Yao Yuan heard this, he rearranged his thoughts. "In conclusion, this enemy fleet is looking for something, but no one knows what that thing is, not even the enemy, so they're trying to preserve everything as unharmed as they can to facilitate their search despite them having an absolute advantage. This in turn hinders their action... is that what you all mean?"

Ren Tao and Xiao Niao looked at each other and nodded in unison. Xiao Niao said, "Yes, and there is a key information... that we received from Blue 6 and the space merchant. The biggest weakness of an AI civilization is their static programming. Yes, they can process many things at a speed that is much faster than a normal lifeform can, but their power of logic is weaker than most. Once they settle on a specific sequence of programs, they will need to adhere to it, so that leads us to believe... that this thing our enemy is looking for is very important and that it is their prime objective. Before accomplishing it, all other objectives are secondary. Unless they are physically threatened, this AI civilization will not change its programming sequence... Even after the war settles, searching for this thing will be its priority."

A Defense Unit Major suddenly asked, "So what about that? Will they still continue to attack us? Will they stop attacking us if we help them search for that thing?"

Yao Yuan cut him off. "No, the focus is not on that thing. I believe I understand what they mean. They're talking about something else... The key is not the thing but how this AI civilization will be inhibited by this thing. Since they couldn't

confirm whether the Steel Ball was the thing or not, Major Wang Hwa managed to stall them for three hours. Similarly, because they don't know whether the thing is in the second defense line, they won't destroy it with a collective cannon shot even though they have broken down most of the base's energy shields. This is where our advantage lies...

"Other than that, the thing we're most afraid of about this fleet is their size, 1,700,000 spaceships. Even now there are still 1,600,000 spaceships remaining. If the whole fleet moves towards us at once, we will be steamrolled, but in reality... if we're fighting them in sections, using the collaboration between our human spaceships and the Black Star troopers, we might survive or even win this war. That is what they mean..."

Using the data from Wang Hwa's final stand, Yao Yuan wasn't exaggerating. With enough Steel Balls in combat, it was entirely possible to use one person to fight more than 1,000 spaceships. However, the lack of Steel Balls was the biggest issue. However, with the cooperation between the Black Star Troopers and the Defense Unit, the war was still winnable.

On the battlefield, the difference in weapons could decide the fate of the war. The Space Combat Jet was designed by Whisperer Bo Li, and the plasma ammo, Explosive Arrow Bullet, was specially designed to shatter plasma energy shields. However, if it was fired more than 10 kilometers away, it would lose its power. In fact, the damage would be so weak that it could barely harm a human being. In contrast, when it was fired at close range, it could easily drill through any plasma shield to harm the entity within it. If attached with this ammo, the Space Combat Jets were truly spaceship assassins... provided they could get close.

That combined with the tactical focus fire of the Gravity Cannon...

"In other words..."

Yao Yuan raised his head to look at the room, and everyone saw the fire burning in his eyes. There was hatred, fury, hope, iron, and blood...

"In other words, we still have hope for victory..."

At the same time, in the civilian quarters at the second defense line...

After the wild expansion, this place was practically a small city already. Even though the size was smaller than the City of Light Moon, it had all the necessary amenities to make life on the base a relaxing one.

However, everyone's faces were drawn. Tremors would shake the city occasionally. This was the sign that Energy Storm cannon was firing. The large counter force caused the whole meteorite the city was based on to shake, and the constant tremors reminded the citizens that they were in the middle of a war...

Susan was chatting with Marrion while her sons Lee Xia Ya and Lee Sai Na were playing with Marrion's son, Rei. The contrast was obvious between the adults and children. The children were playing happily, while the adults were filled with concern.

After the civilians from first defense line arrived at the second defense line, they were immediately assigned by the government to share the household of the family currently residing at the second defense line. Susan, the wife of a lieutenant, was assigned to share the house of second defense line's commander, Jacko's home. The two ladies saw their predicament reflected in the other, so they became fast friends.

"I wonder... when we will win this war." Susan sighed as she took a sip of the tea.

Marrion smiled and said, "Don't worry. My husband told me that the main Black Star Trooper forces are heading our way. There are at least 200 troopers; we will definitely win this."

Susan forced a smile and used the silver spoon to stir her cup of tea. "But... how many troopers will we sacrifice? And the Defense Unit soldiers? How many families will...end up like mine?"

Both women were then silent, each nursing their own thoughts...

Suddenly, the smallest of the children, Lee Sai Na, collapsed on top of the blocks, causing a huge commotion. The two adults turned towards her instantly. Initially, they thought the kids were fighting, but they realized something was wrong instantly because the remaining two boys, even though they didn't fall down, their faces were curiously red. The two women ran to them immediately. The moment they touched their faces, they realized the kids were burning up like... they were falling into a fever!

"Fever?"

The two women exclaimed in unison, and the eyes that looked at each other were filled with indescribable shock...

Chapter 450: Breakthrough... (1)

Martial law was still in effect, even though there were no soldiers armed with guns patrolling the area. To prevent civilians from wandering into military-sealed zones, all the necessary provisions were sent by AI robots right to the houses. The city government advised the citizens to not leave their homes before the war was over, so the streets outside were completely silent. Other than the occasional cleaning robots, there was no one else. Even though there were no crowds to dirty the streets, the robots were still working according to their programming.

When the two women rushed out of the house like crazy, a robot came over to offer them help instantly. Of course, this was another way of telling them not to leave the house. In reality, the two women had already called the hospital, Jacko at central command, and even the medical team attached to second defense line's Black Star Trooper base. However, even so, they couldn't wait anymore, as they wished to send their children to the hospital immediately.

After all, human beings had passed the human strengthening phase. Physically speaking, even the women and elderly were healthier than Old Earth's Special Ops soldiers or Iron-man champion. They were immune to all Old Earth's sicknesses like the flu, fever, cancer, and so on. Technically speaking, human beings couldn't fall victim to fevers anymore...

Unless this was not a normal fever but one that so far couldn't be explained by human technology...

Homo Evolutis awakening!

Yes, Homo Evolutis awakening, the fever could be fatal, and the fatality rate was startling high. Of course, that was if the patient was not given any medical attention. Both women were survivors from Old Earth that had lived through the many Homo Evolutis awakenings on the Hope. They knew how badly human beings

would fare if they had no medical attention during their awakening. Furthermore, these were children, and the eldest among them only 9 years old, so they didn't dare to take any chances.

Both mothers were worried beyond words. Mothers were truly the most powerful creatures in the world when they needed to protect their sons. Even though there were robots blocking their way, the two mothers ignored them, hugging their three children between them, and rushed into the streets.

About five minutes later, the three fainted children were placed in the emergency hovercraft. Inside the vehicle, several doctors were examining the children and applying them the necessary potions.

"The symptoms are very similar..." one of the doctors whispered.

The doctor beside him added, "Yes, the drastic exhaustion of various nutrients in the body, the dehydration, these are indeed the symptoms..."

The group of doctors didn't seem that old, though they were actually professors at the hospital. They were normally separated into their respective sections, but this time they were all there for these patients because three children were sick with fevers simultaneously. Normal fevers were an obsolete disease, so fevers had become a stand-in for Homo Evolutis awakenings. Even though the news was quite shocking when it arrived at the hospital, with the precedence of Zhang San, it was not that unacceptable, especially considering the situation...

The two mothers, though, were only worried about the safety of their children...

At the same time, at central command, after receiving the call from his wife, Jacko remained in a dazed state for at least 10 minutes after hanging up before he cheered loudly, "My son is becoming a Homo Evolutis? My son is going to be a Homo

Evolutis? Hahahaha..."

The people in the room turned to look at him with confusion and surprise. Jacko realized the scene that he had caused, so he coughed and said seriously, "Where's the report on the preparation of the super-large Energy Storm main cannon?"

The people around him instantly mobilized. Moments later, one of the adjutants replied, "All Genesis, Requiem, and Energy Storm cannons have stopped firing. Currently, we're only using normal energy cannons. All the related energy channels have been rerouted to the main cannon. The preparation stage has reached 46 percent. Expected 32 minutes more before the cannon can be used."

"32 minutes you say..."

Jacko frowned. In that half a day, he seemed to have aged at least a decade. There were additional wrinkles around his forehead and there was more white in his hair. After some thoughts, he answered, "Have all the human forces at the outer cannons retreat immediately, leave behind only the AI robots. After making sure there are no people within a 10 kilometer radius, have the place self-destruct... Reroute all the energy channels we have to the main cannon..."

Jacko thought about it, but he didn't seem like he had anything else to add. The second defense line mobilized following his orders. At the outer ring of the defense line, the unknown fleet had completely surrounded the defense line. In fact, the number of the unknown fleet and the space they occupied had already surpassed the size of the meteorite the base was on.

However, the unknown fleet didn't overwhelm the second defense line with their firepower. Instead, they set up their own defense line. Other than Energy Storm, even Requiem wouldn't do much damage to the robot fleet. Under these circumstances, the fleet idled outside of second defense line, not attacking and not

retaliating. No one really understood what they were doing.

This situation was even scarier than if they just swarmed the second defense line. With its natural and man-made defenses, the second defense line could hold on for at least 10 days before it fell. However, this kind of radio silence was disconcerting. Plus, the enemy was an AI civilization, so they couldn't be reasoned with or predicted. What if... they were preparing for an ultimate weapon?

Therefore, instead of waiting to find out what the robot civilization was planning, Jacko, after discussing it with the strategy department at the second defense line, decided to strike first. Their weapon of choice was the large Energy Storm main cannon. There was only one of those at the entire second defense line, and it was built right at the middle of second defense line. Technically speaking, this main cannon wasn't meant for human-use... or to put it into another perspective, it was not something that should be available to humanity, at least at its current technological prowess. This was something designed by Bo Li and was nothing more than a prototype. Its internal structure was built entirely out of the alloys created by the alien plant. In other words, this main cannon was similar to the Steel Ball in the way that they were beyond the comprehension of normal level 3 space civilizations.

Just like that, 10 minutes passed and the charging of the main cannon was completed. With an order from Jacko, the main cannon started its final energy condensation process...

"Fire!"

Instantly, an energy ball with the brightness of the sun shot out of second defense line towards the fleet not far away from it...

Chapter 451: Breakthrough (2)

"Humanity's scientific development is extremely irregular, or rather, humanity's experience caused this irregularity. From a god-tier space civilization's space warp, to a high tier space civilization's anti-gravitational system, to a middle-tier space civilization's psychological control system... humanity has too many technologies that are beyond its current civilization level, and this may cause difficulties in scientific development of human technology in the future!"

This prediction was given about one year ago at human society's first scientific symposium. It was given by an up and rising scientist within the Academy. The sentiment was approved by many of the scientists, including two great scientists. In actuality, this was not something new. This belief was something that existed back on Old Earth; it was akin to something called "degree of civilization maturity."

To use an example, the Mayan civilization was technologically advanced, especially in terms of astrology and history. Even their agricultural technology was almost at the level of a middle-age civilization, and their math and construction were almost the level of modern civilizations. However, such a civilization was still limited within the medieval ages and didn't have any breakthroughs in science until its extinction.

Such examples were observable all over the world, like ancient China, ancient India, Babylon...

Of course, while these words might have academic and realistic implications for the Academy, for the normal citizens, it was exciting news. Public-use technology would continue to improve. Military technology represented humanity's safety in space, so the greater it was, the better it was...

Currently, within humanity's military technology, there were at

least five that were personally designed by Bo Li. Of course, she couldn't have done that alone. She had the best research laboratory where all the latest technological devices could be found. Similarly, she had the best military weapons research team and the team's number was as high as 400 people. This combined with Bo Li's power as a Whisperer meant that the team could showcase extreme potential. Initial assessment put humanity's most advanced weapon at least several hundred years ahead of humanity's current technological level!

Energy Storm was the core of this technological advancement. It was humanity's most powerful long-distance weapon. In fact, other than the surprise shot at the first defense line, at other instances, humanity's normal cannons, including the Genesis and Requiem, were unable to harm the enemy fleet. The most they could take down was either the small battleships or guardian spaceships; they could do no damage to the bigger ships. According to human analysis, there were still at least more than several hundred large spaceships among the enemy fleet. They were like motherships, each of them were more than 200,000 meters long. They were evenly spread among the enemy fleet, and human weapons were helpless against them; even Energy Storm wouldn't be able to cause any damage to them...

In fact, this was the initial design scheme behind the large Energy Storm main cannon. When humanity started building Kun Lun, there was an awareness within the higher ups. If humanity could create such a large mothership and exist as an invincible entity among similar-level space civilizations, then didn't it mean that other civilizations could do the same? After all, humanity had just entered space many years ago? Humanity was still a baby compared to many other space civilizations. Since humanity could create Kun Lun, it was ludicrous to imagine that other space civilizations wouldn't come up with similar ideas.

Therefore, the human government came up with a new order for

Bo Li's team. It was to design a cannon that could take down super-large motherships. The normal Energy Storm was merely a side product of this project, and this sole large Energy Storm main cannon was humanity's actual trump card!

When this ball of energy as bright as the sun shot out from the human base, every individual at second defense line followed its trajectory. It carried with it everyone's hopes until it exploded among the enemy fleet. A giant energy wave overwhelmed the fleet, and it reached even the second defense line...

Yes, the size of the explosion was bigger than expected. Its damage was at least 10 times greater than predicted. After all, this was the first time the cannon had been fired after it was designed and built. Its damage was calculated using normal Energy Storm as the basis, but in reality... the larger the energy, the greater the compression rate, and the higher the damage. The ratio wasn't 1 to 10 as they expected...

Just like that, the large energy was compressed into a small sun and idled in the middle of the enemy fleet. At the same time, energy waves spread out at all directions. They tore through the ranks of the enemy fleet and even caused endless tremors at the second defense line. It felt like the meteorite was being affected by a giant earthquake. There were cracks in the ground and many buildings collapsed. The whole city area was submerged into chaos. There were sounds of crying and screaming, and certain places had caught fire due to the leaking of energy lines. At the same time... the second defense line's energy circulatory system was heavily damaged, causing the life support system to move towards the emergency energy storage. If this war wasn't ended before the emergency energy storage depleted... the entire second defense line would end up a city of death!

Even though Jacko was in central command, he still suffered a nasty fall. However, he quickly jumped from the floor and yelled, "Start the system self-prognosis immediately! What about the

military observation team? Analyze the damage situation of the enemy fleet! How are things at the civilian sectors? The various weapon systems? Also... is the large Energy Storm main cannon still usable? Quick! I need the answer within five minutes!"

Central command was chaotic, but they were, after all, soldiers. The prolonged training still made them return to their discipline and senses quickly. In less than five minutes, all the reports had been prepared.

"Second defense line's internal life support system is losing energy. Damage rate 26.3 percent, expected repair time is 17 hours... the emergency energy can last for 72 hours. There is ample time..."

"Most of second defense line's external structure have been destroyed. Less than 30 percent of siege buildings survived..."

"Energy Storm main cannon's parts have been completely ruined. In a short amount of time... no, more accurately, building another one will take less time? What kind of sh*tty data is this? Have them recheck this!"

Jacko looked through all the reports with a drawn face. He cursed and yelled within central command. His usual cool had been lost. With the blood trailing down his face, instead of a military soldier, he looked more like a gangster.

However, when the more detailed report came, he became silent instantly before the whole central command erupted in cheer!

With just that one cannon shot, in visible range, the unknown fleet had lost at least 500,000 spaceships, and this included at least 30 motherships. And that was not counting the ones that had been vaporized. In other words, that one shot had taken out at least one-third of the enemy numbers!

Of course, this was a result that couldn't be repeated. One was because the enemy fleet had stopped moving around the second

defense line and their arrangement was tactical. Two was due to the energy requirements of the main cannon; to fire another shot was impossible. That one shot was practically a miracle!

The good cheer lasted for only a moment before Jacko roared, "Assign the Defense Unit with AI robots to go rescue and help the citizens. At the same time, start repairing all the cannons and salvage those that cannot be repaired. Those that can still be used, continue firing. Make use of this opportunity when the enemy is confused..."

However, before he finished, the small dots of light that represented the enemy fleet on the large 3D image in the room started to move. There was no chaos or retaliation... They moved with startling uniformity. Yes, this was a fleet without any lifeforms. They were merely machines. For this fleet, there was only data. Be it destruction of 100,000 ships, 200,000 ships, or 500,000 ships, they were all only data...

Therefore, the expected chaos didn't happen. Instead, the fleet started moving towards the second defense line. They didn't fire any cannons. Just like what happened at first defense line... they were going to land and overwhelm the second defense line.

Instantly, everyone's brains stopped moving and their eyes reddened with bloodlines. Everyone could see the end before them. The innumerable robots landing on second defense line, taking advantage of the fact that the defense mechanism was down. Then the citizens would be...

The thing that increased the sense of fear most was that the large fleet started to separate. With the people at the second defense line watching, a large section of the fleet departed to head... towards the City of Light Moon.

This represented... extinction? Human extinction?

"No, there's still hope!" Jacko suddenly roared as he slammed his bloodied military cap down. Like a gambler, he yelled, "Continue

my orders from before. Use all the available weapons to stop the fleet from getting close to second defense line... and wait for me to return!

"We still have hope! We have three Homo Evolutis in the second defense line, but we only need one. We have equipment within our hangar that is powerful enough to stop the fleet from coming close to second defense line and to buy enough time for the New Solar System's first fleet to arrive...

"Rei and a Steel Ball!"

Chapter 452: Steel Ball Standing in Space (1)

"This psychological control system is unique in the sense that it can connect to your brain waves through super-energy condensation. From a certain perspective, this means that the structure aligned to your brain wave will become part of your body, and all the signals will become a signal that you can sense directly... to put it simply, this system is an extension of your brain!

"All of us know that the human brain is the most mysterious human body part. In fact, even though we're now a level 3 space civilization, our understanding of the human brain is still fairly lacking, especially in terms of spirit, consciousness, and logic. It has to be said that the creator of this system is really a genius, but it is still incomplete, so it might cause an overload of sensory information...

"If this is our brain, then the problem can be easily solved. For example, if you went shopping on a busy street and you ran into a familiar face and started chatting, the other noises from the street would naturally fade away for you to focus on your conversation. Similarly when you're asleep, the surroundings will become quiet. If there is a constant water dropping sound in the background, it'll disturb your sleeping pattern. Our brains are able to filter out this unnecessary information naturally...

"However, the incompleteness of the system means that it doesn't have a natural or fully functioning filter. Furthermore, the system will cause an influx of information that is normally ten times the size of normal situation. The consequence will be brain death for normal human beings and drowsiness, or in some cases, death for Homo Evolutis... Currently, only Yao Yuan, who has received plenty of training, can survive the excessive information influx for an extended period of time before the sleep comes...

"However... even if this system is incomplete, it doesn't mean

that no one can use it. In fact, according to our research, there is one kind of person that can use them... they are children. Yes, compared to adults, children have a more simplified thought process, and that aids with information filtering. In fact, if the user is a Homo Evolutis under the age of 10, the pressure the system will have on the children is much smaller than the pressure it will have on Yao Yuan. In fact, if the children focus completely in battle, they might not even feel the pressure of the additional information...

"The internal structure of the Steel Ball contains a plasmatic ion cold fission reactor. Its energy output is no different from normal plasmatic ion fission reactor, but its stability is at least 100 times its normal variant. For a Steel Ball the size of 15 meters, the reactor can ensure that it will keep on functioning for at least a year...

"...So the biggest issue in the construction of Steel Ball is not the materials but the lack of qualified pilots..."

Jacko naturally didn't know about this conversation. In fact, the Steel Ball currently still qualified as a grade A confidential detail. Other than a handful, most human beings were not privy to the design and construction of Steel Ball. The only thing confirmed by the citizens was that usage of Steel Ball would have a great toll on its user. Even a powerful Homo Evolutis like Yao Yuan would be greatly affected, much less a normal human being.

Jacko sat in his personal hovercraft that came with its own driver. He gripped his hands tightly, his fingers interlocking. He sat quietly, his face as dark as abyss. However, there was a trace of hesitation on it. From the central command to the hospital, he maintained this expression.

The journey was not long, and along the way were endless scenes of tragedies. People crying on the street, collapsing buildings, cracks on the ground, there were also explosions from energy plants and storage. The number of deaths had to be more than 100. This was a harrowing event. If this was peace time, he would

definitely be deposed from his post as the commanding officer and perhaps even thrown into jail. But this was war... if he didn't come up with a solution soon, perhaps everyone there would...

Thinking about this, Jacko gripped his fist and his face had a trace of conviction on his face like he had just come to a decision...

Luckily, the hospital was still standing even though tons of equipment had been destroyed, especially those related to energy reserves. This caused half of the hospital to be unusable. Thankfully, the Homo Evolutis sector wasn't affected, so when Jacko arrived at the hospital, he saw three children being given the drip and two women guarding over them.

When Jacko arrived, Marrion was first shocked before walking over to ask, "What's wrong? Why are you here when it's wartime?"

Jacko didn't say a word but reached out to smooth his wife's hair. Then he walked to one of the attending doctors to ask, "Doctor, I want you to tell me whether my son has really awakened to a Homo Evolutis or if he's just suffering from a common fever."

The doctor appeared to be in his middle-age, so this meant that he was probably over 90 years of age. In fact, he was one of the few medical experts that came from Old Earth. He said seriously, "Lieutenant, with all due respect, you're a lieutenant, so you should know by now that we humans will no longer fall sick to fever. It is the same for children as well. After the human strengthening project began, we've only have three fever cases, and these are the three. No, wait, I stand corrected. There are four, the other one being Zhang San. Since he was confirmed to be a Homo Evolutis, then yes, the children are Homo Evolutis as well."

"Is that so..." Jacko smiled apologetically at the doctor before turning to his wife. After he had his men usher the doctors and nurses out of the room, he said, "Marrion, I have a bad news. Unfortunately... I've failed, no, the second defense line has failed. Even though the power of the main cannon was stronger than

expected, we do not have the time to wait for the first fleet to come rescue us. Even if they were just one day away from us, this place will fall in less than 24 hours and we will all die..."

Marrion opened her mouth wide, but no words came out. With her hand on her chest, she eventually gasped, "Oh, God, Jacko, please tell me you're kidding..."

Susan beside her was also in a state of disbelief.

Jacko smiled. "Honey, how could I joke about something like that... The scariest thing is the numbers of the fleet. According to our analysis, there is at least 300,000 spaceships heading towards the City of Light Moon. Even though the city is much bigger than this base, their military defense is much smaller than ours... so humanity is facing extinction. How can I joke about something like that?"

"God, please look after us humans, to help us overcome this ordeal..." Marrion started to pray.

Jacko, though, bent over to look at his son. He was a healthy mixed blood baby, with yellowish brown skin and Brunette, curly hair. This was his son, Rei...

"Honey... I want our son to get in a Steel Ball."

Marrion still hadn't recovered from her shock and Jacko's words didn't register in her mind, so she asked, "What did you say just now? Sorry, I didn't hear you."

Jacko stood up to look his wife straight in the eye. "Honey, my dear wife... I want our son to get in a Steel Ball to control it. Currently, there are two Steel Balls left on the base. Unfortunately, the tremor just now had caused a crack in the hangar and one of them fell into the crevice and lodged itself there. We are unable to retrieve it in a short amount of time, so we only have one Steel Ball left, and I want Rei to be the pilot."

Marrion was stunned before rushing to Rei's side and forming a

blockade around him. She yelled, "Jacko, you cannot do this! Our son is only nine years old. Maybe he is only suffering from a fever; no one can be certain he has already awakened to a Homo Evolutis, and this is the Steel Ball you're talking about. He'll die..."

"Honey, do you know what is at stake here? The City of Light Moon, Homeward Planet, the place where the Hope landed, that's the end of the line for humanity! If that place falls, it is over for us humans! So..."

Jacko argued seriously. Then he walked to his wife to give her a hug. Using a voice that only he and his wife could hear, he said, "I know what you want to say, but please don't say it. Indeed, Rei is not the only Homo Evolutis here, but... they are not our children, and Rei is my son. I know this is unfair, but it was also unfair when the heroes at the first defense line had to sacrifice themselves. It was unfair when Major Wang Hwa brought his team to meet death. The world is unfair... I'm sorry, Marrion, I love you and I love Rei, but..."

Jacko used the back of his hand to knock at a point at the back of Marrion's head, causing her to faint instantly. He placed his wife at the bed before hugging his unconscious son off the bed. He kissed his son's face and brows and tears fell out of the corners of his eyes.

"Rei, my son, you're Jacko's son, and you're destined to be a hero, the youngest and the most powerful Homo Evolutis..."

"I'm very proud of you!"

Chapter 453: Steel Ball Standing in Space!

(2)

Rei had a dream that could only be described with the word "weird"...

In a world of darkness, three balls of light were struggling greatly. They tried to light up the darkness around them, but it was to no avail as the darkness was simply too large and encompassing, like the universe. In contrast, the balls of light were too small, like droplets of water in the ocean. They were overwhelmed and consumed by the darkness...

Just as he turned to look at the three balls of light, they too seemed to discover him. Instantly, the three balls of light rushed towards him. He was afraid because he had no idea what they were. Plus they were burning, and he was afraid of being scorched. His natural instinct was to run, but unfortunately, he was unable to move in the darkness. He could only watch as the largest fireball rushed into his body. In that instant, he could see a large man laughing openly in space...

The other two fireballs also disappeared into his body and then the world returned to complete darkness. He could no longer see anything and he was left alone in this world of emptiness. There was nothing but himself standing alone...

He was afraid and lonely. The loneliness was like chills that gripped his heart. He wished to see his parents, his friends, but there was nothing around him but loneliness...

Slowly, he felt like something was trying to grow out of his body. It was a light, a flame, but it was restricted within his body like his flesh and bones were a cage. Just as he was about to go into despair, a ray of brilliant light shone from behind him. He turned around unconsciously and saw in the world of darkness a gigantic sun. Its light warmed the world around it and the darkness could

do nothing to consume it. In fact, the light was dispersing the darkness, making the world come alive. At the same time, the fire and light within his body seemed to resonate with the sun. They struggled to escape his body and instantly, he too became part of the light...

"AH!"

Rei suddenly sat up and his whole body was covered with cold sweat. Before he realized what was happening, a giant tremor shook him awake. It made him feel like he was sitting in a roller-coaster...

Several seconds later, Rei got a clearer view of his surroundings. There was nothing around him, no doctors, no parents, no sign of any human but several AI robots. There were plenty of IV drips connected to his body. He was suddenly reminded of the time he was trapped in the darkness and he started to cry, "Mommy, I want Mommy. Daddy, where are you? What is this place? Please come save me."

Then the few robots started to move. One of them helped removed the drip from Rei's body, another pressed the front of its chest, and a 3D image shot out of its eyes.

Jacko's bloodied face appeared before Rei... in 3D image.

"Don't cry, my son, be strong, you're already a big boy. Remember how you once told me you'll grow up to be a stand-up man? Then stop crying... From this point onwards, you have to remember one thing, that is we humans will never cry, we only believe in iron and blood!"

Looking at his father's image, Rei wiped away his tears and promised in his childish voice, "I remember, Father! I will not cry anymore!"

Jacko smiled as if anticipating his son's reaction beforehand. "That's my boy... Rei, didn't you tell me you wanted to become

humanity's hero, a Black Star Trooper? Now is your chance; you're finally qualified to be a Black Star Trooper...

"Listen to me carefully. After this video is over, follow the instructions given by the robot that showed you this image, he will tell you what to do... My son, my dearest son...

"My son, you're also the son of humanity. I know this is unfair to you, but when you hear this message, me and your mother, as well as the aunties and uncles who have been looking after you, we're all dead... And you will represent our hope. Go to the deepest corner of the hangar where the latest human invention, the weapon that can only be controlled by Homo Evolutis, the Steel Ball sits... Make me proud, Son.

"Be a hero, carry with you your father's wish, your mother's love, and your precious memories to become a hero and protect this memory, protect this... happiness!"

After Jacko's image disappeared, there was a conviction settling in Rei's heart. His tears were threatening to flow, but this time, he bit on his knuckles until his teeth poked deep into the bone. His blood flowed, but not his tears...

The robot turned and headed towards the hangar. The ground was still shaking, and Rei could hear the occasional explosion. With a grit of his teeth, he followed the robot obediently deeper into the hangar. After some time, he saw a large, metallic box sitting there. The robot was pressing some buttons on the box's surface, and very soon, the box slowly opened to reveal its contents.

It was a metallic, silvery-white sphere about 15 meters wide and tall. Rei had to tip his head back to see the top of the sphere. While he was stunned by the size of the sphere, the robot continued mobilizing the sphere. There was a jolt of electricity that lit up the surface of the sphere. Suddenly, a space opened up and a staircase extended into the darkness.

Rei swallowed to steel his nerves. He was really nervous and afraid. After all, he just woke up to a world where his parents were gone and was suddenly left with the message from his father. This was not something a nine-year-old boy should face or understand. He was flustered, and he stood there quietly, unsure of what to do.

The robot didn't rush him but stood there quietly since its orders were all completed. Rei took careful steps towards the entrance. However, before he took the first step, there was a giant earthquake that made him fall completely to the floor. Not only that, the hangar itself started to collapse. A giant piece of ceiling cracked and fell on top of the metallic sphere. The sphere was powerful, so it survived with barely a scratch. In contrast, the robot standing next to it was smashed into pieces. Rei shielded his eyes from the flames and explosion. Then he felt something wet on his face. He touched it and realized his face was scratched... probably by the metallic shrapnel from the explosion.

There was nothing else he could do. The hangar was collapsing and the structure was falling apart. If he didn't make his move soon, he might be buried alive. With no other options, he rushed into the darkness with tears in his eyes and a scream on his lips.

After Rei was swallowed up into the Steel Ball, the staircase started to retract and the entrance closed. Rei found himself back in the world of darkness. He didn't dare to move a muscle. Suddenly, his world lit up as a silvery light appeared all around him. It was rather cramped corridor. At the end of it sat a chair. Rei moved towards it and realized that the space was larger than the corridor, it was about two cubic meters. It was a small circular room.

When Rei stepped into the room, a bunch of data appeared in Rei's sight in 3D images. The data included the images of various places around the base, like the collapsing hangar, the pathways connected to the hangar, and even the residential area where numerous oval-shaped tentacle-robots fell from the sky like stars.

There was a large gash above the sky of the second defense line, and a silver battleship was squeezing its way through. On the ground, people were rounded up and slaughtered...

Rei gritted his teeth and jumped into the seat, then he started searching for buttons... Yes, he had played plenty of battleship simulation games in his life and had already finished all four generations of the game. He believed he had the skills to survive this one as well, but he was confused as there was no joystick or buttons in sight, so how was he going to control this thing?

Just as Rei looked around, a robotic voice said, "Please provide your full name. Steel Ball Prototype is attached to human information. Non-humans will be unable to pilot this..."

Rei was spooked and whispered in return, "My... my name is Rei."

"Please provide your full name. Steel Ball Prototype is attached to human information. Non-humans will be unable to pilot this... I'm sorry, but we are unable to find your information in the human archives. Please provide your full name in the next ten seconds or the Steel Ball Prototype will initiate self-destruct sequence, 10, 9, 8..."

Rei suddenly saw a bunch of soldiers in the 3D images. They were fighting the robot army in their spacesuits, but they were suddenly vaporized from an energy shot from the sky. Instantly, his eyes reddened. He was afraid... afraid that his father was part of the unfortunate group!

"Dad, Mom! Start, you lousy machine, why won't you start? Didn't you ask for my name? My name is Xing Ling-Amulo-Rei! Start!" Rei yelled as tears poured out of his eyes.

"Xing Ling-Amulo-Rei... information found, son of lieutenant Jacko, voice analysis... match, DNA... match. Non-Homo Evolutis, fatality rate from using Steel Ball: 100 percent... Do you wish to start the Steel Ball Prototype?"

Rei yelled, "Yes, start now!"

As he said so, a bright light consumed his consciousness. Instantly, his thoughts seemed to escape from his body to encapsulate the whole sphere...

Just as the civilians at the second defense line looked on with despair at the carnage around them, at the military hangar, a silver sphere suddenly rose, and in less than one second, the several battleships above the second defense line exploded...

Chapter 454: White Demon!

Amulo was a good kid. Anyone who knew him would attest to him. Other than the occasional conflict with his parents, he was truly a kid with a good heart.

His favorite pastime was gaming, and he was particularly good at spaceship and battleship simulator games. In reality, after humanity arrived at the New Solar System, the population number increased greatly, and in the foreseeable future, this number was only going to increase until the number of new-borns reached more than 95 percent of the total population.

Under these circumstances, the issue of education became very important. Other than traditional schooling system and proliferation of level 2 and 3 space civilization's scientific knowledge, games were an important element of this construct...

After a game was born, it would be there to stay, be it a game for children or adults. To borrow a simple example, sports initially was a game. Soccer, card games, mah-jong, golf, these are all games. Even the electronic games created after the advent of computers were also games. Even in the harsh period right after the Hope left Old Earth, there were already games in the Hope's central mainframe.

Therefore, to destroy the gaming culture within humanity was impossible and improbable. However, half of the human population was from the eastern culture, which meant that the zeitgeist was traditional and conservative. They had a negative view of gaming. In fact, in the eighth year after humanity arrived at New Solar System, there were cries for the government to ban the sale of games to underage teens.

On the other hand, the remaining fifty percent from the more liberal western culture had their own perspective. In the years after humanity had arrived in New Solar System, due to the

relative peace and great scientific leaps, it was a warm bed for an artistic renaissance. The vibrancy of this renaissance couldn't be underestimated, and the demand for enrichment of gaming culture was brought up alongside its cries for a ban.

The party who started this debate was a Caucasian family with 10 children. Their eldest was already 16, and he was a space baby. The parents were in the field of education; the wife was a secondary school teacher, while the husband was a university lecturer. They had their own perspectives and understanding on education. When the cries for banning of games appeared in the society, they joined their names to release this counter-article.

Their articles believed that banning games was no different from killing humanity's creativity. This was something undesirable. From the information taken from the space merchants, all the civilizations with racial senescence had a common thread: all of them had lost their cultural games and would not create new games anymore. In fact, dying civilizations did not have the concept of games in their cultural systems. This was something confirmed by the space merchants' information.

The article also argued that games and knowledge could be interlinked. If the only reason for banning of games was for a better result, then the children that came out of the educational system would be no different from an AI robot because they would merely be carbon copies of each other. For innovation and creativity, there had to be more than a marking system that relied solely on numbers. This article was actually directly against the educational scheme at the time, but it had at the very end of the article its trump card.

It was related to humanity's current situation in space. Humanity's condition was actually treacherous despite the illusion of safety. Under this situation, it was necessary for each individual to be a soldier. Of course, compulsory military service for all civilians was impossible as that was too unrealistic. However, the

least they should do was ensure that each citizen could wield guns or pilot space vehicles at the most dangerous situations and not only hide. The best method to do this was not through compulsory military training but games.

Through simulation games, like spaceship simulators, human children could master these skills from young. Using humanity's current technology, the simulation of piloting these spacecraft was actually not much different from the real thing. If it was necessary, they could find the best players and cultivate them as future pilots. According to scientific research, the best players could actually pilot the Space Combat Jets used by Homo Evolutis. It was proven that their sense of dimensionality was actually not worse than that of the most basic Homo Evolutis. They were only lacking in the Homo Evolutis' sense of danger, but that could be cultivated through experience.

Due to this last paragraph, the article caught society's attention almost instantly. Even the government officials had read it. Guang Zhen asked the Academy the validity of the claim and it had been confirmed to be true. Right after that, he started promoting the commonality of gaming.

The reason was simple. Even though Homo Evolutis had a natural advantage in piloting space vehicles, they were not all great soldiers. After all, the birth of a Homo Evolutis was completely random; an electrician or painter could awaken to become a Homo Evolutis. They were not natural fighters, and these occurrences were not uncommon within the Black Star Troopers. They relied on their natural advantage as Homo Evolutis to survive in war, but in terms of combat prowess, they were absolutely no match for professionals like Ebon or Liu Bai.

In contrast, the ratio of good fighters in the Defense Unit was greater than Black Star Troopers. In fact, they had plenty of good pilots with natural instinct around vehicles. After their potential was fully activated, even facing up against the non-fighting type

Homo Evolutis, they still had a 30 percent chance of winning. What if the number of good pilots in the Defense Unit became several hundred or thousand times the number of Black Star Troopers? Then... the Defense Unit could truly replace Black Star Troopers to become humanity's real guardians.

Just like that, after the games were broadly introduced to the new generation, the scores of these children were secretly recorded by the government. The number of potential great pilots had reached 1,700 plus, and Amulo was at the forefront of that list. He was primed to be a human spaceship pilot in the future.

But...

What if such a great pilot awakened to become a Homo Evolutis? This kind of combination...

Was akin to the presence of a demon! A demon that could cause chaos through the enemy ranks! His space combat prowess, according to the data, could even rival Yao Yuan's...

Amulo could feel himself becoming part of the Steel Ball, and plenty of information surged into his mind. It merely caused him to feel like his head had become a bit heavy. After he ignored this white noise, it didn't feel like anything was out of place. At the same time, the structure, speed, energy, and weapon information of the Steel Ball were at his fingertips.

"The maximum speed of the Steel Ball is 4.7 times the speed of normal battleships; it is reaching five times the maximum speed of the energy umbrella propeller. The longest period of flight is 472 days...

"The interior of the Steel Ball is equipped with homeostatic function. There are auto circulatory and waste disposal services...

"The shell of the Steel Ball is created using the alien plant's alloy. It can defend against most plasma weapons. Attacks that are too strong might destroy the shell directly...

"The Steel Ball contains a powerful plasma shield. The plasma shield has the ability to decentralize other plasma shields, causing the Steel Ball to phase through other shields that it comes into contact with.

"The Steel Ball has three set of weapons. Super long-range, particular condensation ray: its damage is similar to the cannon fire of a guardian spaceship, one bullet each shot and cool down of 60 seconds after each shot...

"Middle and close distance, explosive plasmatic bullet: it has the ability to shatter energy shields. It can take down all sorts of shield at close range. It was created using the latest half-energized ammo. Cool down time of 0.04 seconds after each shot and every Steel Ball is equipped with 674,200 shots...

"Close distance, energy condensation knife: it can slice through objects less than xx mass. No cool down time, the range of attack is about six meters around the Steel Ball...

"The Steel Ball contains a 360 degree, no blind angle surveillance, and the longest surveillance distance is 7,940,000,000 kilometers...

"The Steel Ball has the ECS system and related creator's particle creator and isolator..."

In just a few seconds, Amulo understood all the above information instinctually and an excitement arose in his heart. This Steel Ball was much greater than a normal spaceship; this was even more of a boss than the sosses he faced in games...

How could he not win with this thing?!

Just as he thought so, the Steel Ball had already appeared before the enemy spaceships. The bullets started firing from the holes that appeared on the surface of the Steel Ball. They shattered the enemy's plasma shields easily. In just a few seconds, several spaceships within his sight exploded. After that, the group of battleships behind the explosion and carnage all turned towards

him.

"...Just regular mobs?"

Amulo mumbled to himself as the Steel Ball rushed out of the crack above the second defense line, trailing a road of explosions and light...

The white Steel Ball! The power of a demon!

Chapter 455: Ambush (1)

Guang Zhen's specially-designed super high speed admiral ship had entered the hangar. The name of the ship might sound complicated, but it was actually very small, even smaller than a normal battleship. Its greatest feat was its speed. It used a type of technology similar to the Steel Ball's energy umbrella propeller. For current human technology, only a spaceship smaller than one-fifth the size of battleship could use such a device. This couldn't be helped as humanity's scientific prowess was too low.

After the last and biggest meeting on the City of Light Moon, Guang Zhen used this specially-designed spaceship to catch up to the New Solar System's first fleet's vanguard unit. Even though the vanguard unit was only one-tenth the size of the total fleet, with 20 spaceships the size of the Hope, 120 guardian spaceships, and 300 plus battleships, as well as the fact of them being fully-loaded, unlike the earlier situation where many seats were still empty on the spaceships. With the help of the AI robots, they could already unleash 80 to 90 percent of their fighting potential.

As mentioned above, this unit wasn't the main unit. Their main objective was to come to the aid and protect the civilians from second defense line before making a tactical retreat. The main fighting force was the six Black Star units, totaling up to 60 Black Star Troopers. They would be responsible for the attack and defense part of the mission, to aid the retreat the civilians from second defense line.

Behind this vanguard unit, there were 6 other Black Star units who were doing their last preparations...

"I don't believe this!"

Ebon roared angrily as he paced around the field. The force of his mechanical foot was so strong that it created a large footprint on the ground. He yelled, "Wang Hwa, that idiot, is dead? I refuse to

believe this! This has to be fake news!"

With two hands behind his back, Liu Bai told Ebon, "Will you please calm down? This is why you're unable to become the leader of a Black Star unit, it's because of your rash nature! Calm down and listen to me... Wang Hwa's sacrifice is already confirmed, this has been proven to be true."

Ebon stood there for a long time with a drawn face before finally adding, "Why... why can all of you be so calm? Tell me, Liu Bai, you're like this, Ol' captain is like that, Captain Wong is like this, everyone... How can all of you can be so calm. Wang Hwa is no longer with us. Just like Ying, he will never return again! Or... you all don't really..."

Before Ebon could finish, Liu Bai's kick sent him flying five meters back. He finally lost his temper and roared, "If you dare to finish that sentence, I'll personally cut you into pieces! F*ck, what are you trying to imply? That we don't care? If we don't care... this counter-attack mission wouldn't have been ordered! Open your damn eyes and see clearly. Who doesn't care? These are all our comrades, our brothers from the Black Star Unit! Who cannot care?"

Ebon sat down on the floor and his expression was dazed. After some time, he finally stood up with his face twisted with a wicked smile. "Yes, our brothers cannot die for no reason. Yes, we all care about them. The only one who doesn't care is the enemy. His death has saved the lives of 9,000 plus children. It's a worthy death, but it's not enough! We need to serve Wang Hwa somehow, a ritual of sorts to mark his passing. The sacrifice... will be those robot fleets!"

At the same time, the second defense line was almost completely silent. Other than the few cannons that were still firing, the rest of the place had fallen apart. A mass of robots had landed and destroyed the lifeforms there, and they even started to pillage the construction within...

The main base of the second defense line was already surrounded by layers of spaceships. However, at that moment, a silver ball emerged from the crack above the second main base. The spaceships around it exploded in less than two seconds. These spaceships were actually bigger than human battleships and they carried on them many robots. Their main purpose was to assist landing, and their energy shields were so weak that they couldn't defend against the Steel Ball's super long distance particular condensation ray. They were nothing more than sitting targets for the Steel Ball.

The Steel Ball controlled by Amulo had such an incredible speed. Due to its smaller size and more powerful reactor and propeller system, its speed unit time was about six times the speed of the Space Combat Jets. However, the key feature was its dexterity. Since it was completely attached to its pilot's mental frame, the reaction speed of the Steel Ball was the reaction speed of the human brain. Even though it was not light speed, when Amulo recognized the danger, he could immediately evade it. In other words, it was impossible for him to get hit.

In fact, for most space civilizations, the so-called out-of-ship combat jets were all cannon fodder. This was because among level 2 or 3 space civilizations, the combat jets couldn't evade the bullets from the enemies of same level space civilizations. Level 2 space civilizations used Gaussian weapons and level 3 used plasma weapons. Their bullet speed was much faster than the sight and the speed of the brain, especially for the plasma weapon of a level 3 space civilization. Plasma weapons had light speed bullets. As long as it was fired, it was practically impossible to evade. Under this circumstance, those combat jets without powerful energy shields were like cannon fodder.

The only exceptions were the cosmic adapters. Even those without special powers had a great sense of space dimensionality and danger awareness, so they could react before the danger

arrived. Furthermore, for combat in space, due to the intervention of the ECS system and creator's particle, long distance aiming couldn't have a 100 percent accuracy. This combined with the danger sense of cosmic adapters meant that combat jets controlled by cosmic adapters almost wouldn't be hit by long distance shots. They might be hit by blanket shots, but since the damage of the shot was separated, the damage caused would be much smaller. Even if they were hit, the shield would be able to negate the damage.

Under this circumstance, the Steel Ball controlled by Amulo was practically invincible at close range. None of the enemy spaceships could keep up with him, since the Steel Ball was weaving seamlessly through the enemy fleet. At the same time, its bullets in the shape of light orbs managed to phase through energy shields directly. This was too scary. In just 60 seconds since its appearance, the large group of spaceships outside of the second defense line had completely disappeared, leaving behind a large amount of broken pieces in space.

Amulo had taken down at least several thousand smaller landing-use spaceships and battleships. After doing all that, he still didn't feel a heavy weight on his brain. If anything, he felt energized and refreshed, like how he would feel after clearing a gaming level.

Right then, a large mothership started to move. A great number of energy cannons started to collect energy and targeted the Steel Ball. With a twinge of his heart, Amulo sensed the danger coming. He didn't hesitate and the Steel Ball morphed into a silver light. About half a second later, the spot he was at earlier was consumed by a blinding ray of light. Further away, a large meteorite was directly evaporated.

"That's the boss?" Amulo had temporarily forgotten where he was and what he was doing. In fact, he had entered his gaming mind and thought he was playing an extra real game. The Steel Ball was like a cheat, and he enjoyed taking down the plebs around

him.

When the large mothership appeared, Amulo's first thought was that this must be the level's last boss. Without hesitation, he rushed towards it, and as he approached it, the Steel Ball had started firing the particular condensation ray. However, when the ray hit the mothership, it was blocked by a thick plasma shield that was visible to the naked eye.

"Immune?"

Amulo was not shocked. In fact, he predicted this. If the boss was so fragile, then the game wouldn't have survived internal testing. Just as he swerved in an arc around the mothership, all of the attacks by the mothership missed him by a hair. He launched the Explosive Arrow Bullets at the plasma shield. The bullets landed on the shield and started to burrow through it. However, the shield was so thick that the bullets eventually exploded in the middle of the shield.

As Amulo continued to evade the attacks, he thought about it and rushed forward once more. He aimed about 10 shots at the same spot. All of the bullets started burrowing at once. Finally, one of them got through the shield but exploded in the space between the shield and the mothership.

"This also won't work? Then this is the last resort..."

Amulo started communicating with the Steel Ball. In just the blink of an eye, the surface of the Steel Ball started to surge with electricity. After its appearance, the energy shield around the Steel Ball started to glow. Its brightness was beyond the intensity observable by the naked eye. The next second, the Steel Ball knocked into the mothership's shield. In the midst of sparks, the Steel Ball crashed through the shield, creating a hole on the energy shield. Then two light sabers appeared beside the Steel Ball. The Steel Ball rushed towards the mothership, and there were explosions along the way...

At the same time, at a place not far away from the second defense line, there was nothing... or rather, nothing could be seen because of the ECS system.

"...I see it, there are three fireballs there. Two of them are sitting quietly, while the last one is moving rapidly about. It is glowing brightly, but it is unlike the Chancellor's sun, it isn't a mere fireball but one that is glowing intensely..."

Zhang San closed his eyes and reported.

Guang Zhen nodded and turned to Xiao Niao beside him. "What do you think?"

Xiao Niao thought about it and answered, "It cannot be Major Wang Hwa's unit, they're already confirmed to be dead. The observation was personally confirmed by Xi Kong, so the only possibility is a newly awakened Homo Evolutis like Lieutenant Zhang San, a latent Homo Evolutis seed..."

Guang Zhen nodded affirmatively before telling Zhang San seriously, "Then... contact him, tell the Homo Evolutis that is battling to lure the enemy towards the designated coordinates... Drag the time out until..."

"We arrive to ambush them!"

Chapter 456: Ambush! (2)

"...First! I have to stress one thing. Even if we sacrifice everything, all the vehicles, technology, base, and even parts of Kun Lun and we have to start everything again from scratch, even if we have to sacrifice all the soldiers, we have to save the civilians and children trapped at second defense line!"

Yao Yuan looked at all the gathered officers before him. This meeting involved all the highest ranking officials currently in the human government, including Guang Zhen and all the Black Star Troopers.

"Here are your orders: I demand that the Defense Unit and Black Star Troopers follow this order... To have an ambush at a space not far from the outskirts of the second defense line. First, a vanguard unit will get all of the surviving individuals out from the second defense line and move them towards coordinates xxx. Release a large scale creator's particle to conceal the location of the main fleet.

"Then we will set up a last stand at this place!"

Yao Yuan slammed his fist on the table, his expression as dark as the other side of the moon...

This tactic was made after they received the information from Wang Hwa's Steel Ball. The robot fleet was programmed to capture or destroy all the resistance that appeared before them. They would overwhelm their target with numbers and not tactical advantage; this was observable from the information taken from first defense line and the Steel Ball. After the meeting was over, Yao Yuan and Guang Zhen shared a short conversation before Guang Zhen departed to catch up to the vanguard unit.

"Ol' Wong, listen to me..."

Yao Yuan puffed on a cigarette before turning to address Guang

Zhen seriously. "There are around 194,000 plus people stationed at the second defense line, including the Defense Unit soldiers, their families, children, workers, and civilians. That is about one-fifth the size of our total population. Currently, there are two great scientists working and stuck there due to the war... Either way, be it the one-fifth of the population or the two great scientists, we cannot afford to lose either one...

"Even though the retreat order has been given, the Hope and the other motherships the size of the Hope could last us more than 100 years in space. The premise is that all of the surviving civilians warp away. We cannot afford to lose one-fifth of the human population or two great scientists!

"Furthermore, I've come to a decision. In the cosmos, a civilization, a race's heart, could only increase but not decrease. If you only see yourself as a dust, then you'll only become a speck of space dust. In the war of this cosmic jungle, the greatest fear is not a race's arrogance... but being content with one's weakness. Since other space civilizations could improve to become middle-tier, high-tier, and even god-tier space civilizations, why can't us humans? Remember the two neutron star fragments? Remember the Song of Destruction? Remember how the races at the shelter treated us?

"What is their basis for calling us an enslaved race? Just because they entered space earlier than us, does that give them the right to be so arrogant?! Cosmic lifeforms' biggest fear is not arrogance but contentment in weakness!"

Yao Yuan's veins were popping when he was saying these things. He took a deep drag of the cigarette before telling Guang Zhen, "Since the enemy is a force that we are not completely powerless against, since they have a weakness, I've decided to fight this war... To tell you the truth, even though arrogance is not a sin, rashness is. Therefore, I will not ask all the humans to take this last stand with us. If we lose... the citizens at the City of Light Moon, the

remaining soldiers.,and the ten Black Star Troopers I've left behind will warp away, taking our technology and collections, like the illusory space, the UFO, the information from the HE research center, the database for the zerg genetics, the alien plant, and all the related objects. They will warp away and begin a new life somewhere else...

"But I will not leave, since I've selected this path on behalf of humanity. I will stay to walk this path to the end..."

Yao Yuan squished the cigarette in his hand and told Guang Zhen, "...If your vanguard unit fails, then wait for me... we'll meet again in the underworld!"

Guang Zhen sat in the captain's chair in central command. All the orders were given from his seat. He lowered his military cap quietly to shield his eyes before mumbling to himself, "Ol' Captain, this choice... is the choice of all soldiers, is it not? You're still the same as ever, nothing has changed, always ready to shoulder all the responsibilities..."

"But..." Guang Zhen straightened his cap and smirked chillingly. "This is your style, isn't it? Then, let me... fire the first round of retaliation for you!"

It had been six hours since Amulo got into the Steel Ball. At the end of the day, Amulo was just a child; he was feeling hungry and thirsty and a little heavy in the head. However, that wasn't something he couldn't handle. One summer holiday, when his father was on a mission and his mother was at work, he tried playing a game for three days non-stop. He ate very little, and other than the 24-hour hibernation that happened after the gaming marathon, there were no side effects.

Even though piloting the Steel Ball was more tiring than playing a game, it was merely a mental exhaustion, and six hours for him was nothing. With his consciousness checking in, the glucose and nutrient drips started to enter his body. Gradually, the feeling of

hunger and thirst disappeared and he returned to dealing with these enemies.

Around five hours ago, he heard a weird voice in his head... In fact, it was inaccurate to call it a voice, because it did not communicate in terms of language. It was a vague intention or thought that told him to lure the enemy to a certain location and stall them there.

Even though Amulo was curious about the origin of this message, he didn't feel alerted by it. After all, a game was often more than just endless killing, there were side quests like retreat, cover, protect, and so on. Leading the enemy to the edge of the second defense line was not out of the ordinary for this kid gamer. Therefore, in the past five hours, he had been trying to accomplish this mission.

In the past five hours, using this Steel Ball, Amulo had taken down more than 10,000 spaceships, including battleships and guardian spaceships. The only thing that gave him a pause was the enormous motherships. They were too big and their shields were too strong. Even Steel Ball itself was unable to phase through the energy shields.

With a shiver, Amulo felt like the Steel Ball was about to shatter. Of course, this was merely a feeling in his mind; the Steel Ball was perfectly fine. However, it was true that the Steel Ball was just hit by another blanket fire. One or two blanket fires were unable to deal real damage to the Steel Ball, but what about hundreds or thousands? The thought of that... was quite scary.

"Why isn't the mission ending? What's next? Fight until the end?" As Amulo tussled with the enemy, this thought cropped up in his mind.

After he took down another large spaceship and took another three blanket fires, suddenly, a large energy beam shot out from empty space. The energy beam was so bright that when it reached

the enemy fleet, the light started to bend. This was Requiem! The focus fire of many Requiem cannons!

At the same time, about 10 light orbs had found their way to the center of the enemy fleet. A great energy wave ruined at least 1,000 spaceships. Before Amulo's eyes, a great amount of spaceships shifted in and out of existence. This was the effect of their ECS System being affected. Not only that, while Amulo was slightly stunned, about 10 latest Space Combat Jets had arrived at his side. The enemy spaceships around him exploded because these combat jets were all equipped with explosive arrow bullets that could take down plasma shields!

In the leading ship, Guang Zhen ordered, "Full speed ahead! Following the path opened up by the Black Star Troopers! We have to buy more time for the guardian spaceships to get to the civilians!"

At the same time, even though most of the alien fleet had been distracted by Amulo's Steel Ball, there was still quite a few robots from the fleet that had landed on second defense line. The place had been under assault for several hours already, and the fatality number was over several ten thousands. The internal structure of the place was falling apart and the fall of the second defense line was only a matter of time.

Just as the people were in the midst of despair, the few alien spaceships surrounding the second defense line exploded, and just like that, the guardian spaceships entered the base's space ports.

"Everyone, listen up, we're the human Defense Unit. We're under the order to help the civilians at the second defense line to retreat. From now on, everything will be following the military rules. Anyone who is found purposely disrupting the peace will be executed..."

"We will not abandon anyone, we will not run or escape. Before everyone is on board, we will stay behind with everyone..."

"To fight until the end of our lives!"

Chapter 457: Red...

The ambush by the vanguard unit was very successful. They managed to take down 30,000 plus alien spaceships at their first contact. While the Energy Storm and Requiem cannons were powerful, the main fighting force was still the six Black Star Trooper units. Each Black Star unit had 10 members, and the leader would be sitting in the main combat jet, using his or her danger sense to assign the members, while the remaining nine members would be separated into groups of three, and every group would form their individual fighting subunit. The six Black Star units therefore had 60 Black Star Troopers and 20 fighting units.

60 Black Star Troopers... and three Black Star Troopers, the combat prowess was more than a 20 times improvement in battle. To utilize the Steel Ball, Wang Hwa had given up using the combat unit strategy. Even though one Steel Ball could rival 10 combat jets, it did decrease the combat capability of the two other Black Star troopers greatly... but here, there was 20 groups of fighting subunits, and they were the top close-range fighters for a level 3 space civilization, the 60 cosmic adapters!

With explosive arrow bullets that could grind through energy shields, the super long-distance particular condensation rays from the combination of three combat jets as well as the plasma energy shield that was installed within each combat jet after their latest update...

This was a storm of retaliation, this was a wave of attack created by 60 cosmic adapters, the roar of humanity's Homo Evolutis!

25 minutes after the ambush began, the damage suffered by the enemy fleet had gone up to 50,000 spaceships. On humanity's side, there were two motherships the size of the Hope that were shot down. The fatality rate had reached 25,000 people... this was a loss that humanity couldn't afford...

"25 minutes, there are still 35 minutes to the projected retreat time. Please hold on..."

Guang Zhen looked at the time displayed on the atomic watch and he mumbled to himself before turning to look at Zhang San beside him... Zhang San didn't belong to the six main Black Star Units, but he was ordered to join the expedition due to his role as an Anima. He was important because he was the only person who could pass through the limitation of creator's particles. He was crucial because he represented... information!

Zhang San was nervous and sad. With his head lowered, he said, "Currently, 54 Homo Evolutis remain, including the unknown Homo Evolutis who is piloting the Steel Ball..."

"In other words, we've lost seven..." Guang Zhen said with a frown, then he continued, "Call the pilot of the Steel Ball to come back to the ship. His piloting time has far surpassed the predicted limitation. He might enter a heavy coma soon if he doesn't return. Then again, there is no guarantee that wouldn't happen even if he returns... Regardless, call him to return and order the Black Star Troopers to cover the area around the motherships..."

"At the same time, have the motherships attack openly to attract the attention of the enemy fleet to decrease the damage heading towards Homo Evolutis... Homo Evolutis are more important than any one of us. Send out this order, and I mean to every mothership, including this one we're in!"

After Guang Zhen gave this order, all the motherships stopped attacking. In fact, after the ambush, the vanguard unit was no longer able to cause any damage to the enemy. The difference in technological level between the two was obvious. Other than the Energy Storm, all the other weapons could barely leave a scratch on the enemy's ships.

On the other hand, even the guardian spaceships from the enemy's side with its condensation cannon fire was powerful

enough to take down the energy shields of humanity's motherships. The weapons and energy shields from both sides were not on an equal stage. The ambush was successful due to the element of surprise as well as the power of the Homo Evolutis and the Steel Ball... Not to be forgotten was the contribution of Bo Li, the weapon Whisperer who managed to create weapons beyond humanity's current scientific level. It was because of her that there were Steel Balls, Energy Storms, and the explosive arrow bullets that performed brilliantly in this war!

If the numbers of spaceships and technological level between the two forces weren't so different, humanity would have a great advantage with its Whisperers...

This thought appeared in Guang Zhen's mind. He took another glance at the atomic watch and time ticked by one second after another. He had never once felt time move so slow before; each second was like 24 hours. Suddenly, he felt the mothership shake...

"The eighth residential area on the left ship has been shot down. The ninth isolation layer has been dropped down. The emergency maintenance workers and AI robots are on the move..."

Guang Zhen sat in the captain's chair with a blank face. He looked at the watch and mumbled, "Faster, faster, we... already don't have much time left."

At the same time, at the second defense line, 11 guardian spaceships acted at transport shuttles. Each spaceship could fit 20,000 civilians; they were more than enough to ferry the entire second defense line. However, retreat was slower than expected because the enemies within the base hadn't been completely cleared out.

Even though most of the enemy fleet had been distracted by the vanguard unit, there were still hundreds of boarding ships around the second defense line and more than ten thousand alien robots swarming the place. This caused a great problem for the retreat

effort. In fact, there came a point where a spaceship was almost taken over by the robots. Even though the Defense Unit's spaceships had been covering the shuttles, the cannon shots couldn't aim at the floor lest they cause more damage to the structural integrity of the base and cause it to collapse. In contrast, the robot enemy caused great damage to the Defense Unit. Their metallic husks were incredibly strong, and each one of them had a small energy shield and great mobility. They had no weakness, and even when they were 70 percent destroyed, they were still killing machines...

To be frank, Defense Unit soldiers weren't Black Star Troopers. They were practically powerless before such an enemy. Because of this, many civilians were unable to reach the spaceships for retreat, because the robots had blocked their way. For this, there were already 500 soldiers who lost their lives, and if this was allowed to continue, it wasn't out of place for the Defense Unit to be completely wiped out.

"Damn it! If only we had a Black Star Trooper. One is better than none. If we could ruin the formation of the enemies, then we could take them down easily from within. Their combat reactions are very bad, so if their formation is ruined, we can land fatal blows on them... Damn!"

This was the leader of the retreat mission, Asete North. He was from the Noah One, and after joining the Hope, he fast became a middle-tier officer in the Defense Unit. He once fought for radical Germany and had a certain fascination with second world-war Germany. After joining the Hope, his fascination turned to Yao Yuan. He believed Yao Yuan was an undeniable human hero and leader. Even though Yao Yuan personally was averse to this fascination, Guang Zhen believed this attitude was not a violation of the current human government's leading policy, so he absorbed him into the Defense Unit and valued him heavily.

Asete was not only Yao Yuan's biggest fan, he was also a fan of

Black Star Troopers. In his eyes, a Black Star Trooper was the greatest fighter. They were the most elite fighting force under Yao Yuan, the final result of human genetic improvement, the perfect human beings. In any simulated combat, he would convert his own fighting course to the ones used by Black Star Troopers, even if the final score was barely acceptable. At this point, his hope turned once more to the Black Star Troopers.

"Black Star Trooper... No, if it's Homo Evolutis, my children are Homo Evolutis."

Perhaps it was fate or coincidence, but one of the families ushered into this spaceship was taken from the hospital. When one of the mothers passed Asete, she happened to hear this lieutenant mumble to himself. Something crossed her mind, and with her eyes glowing red, she hesitated after 10 seconds before coming to a decision and started shouting.

"Yes, my children, my two children are Homo Evolutis, but... only my son can be a fighter, my daughter is still in the middle of a coma."

Asete immediately turned his head around. He walked to the mother's side and said seriously, "Lady, I hope you know the severity of the claim you've made. This is not only related to your son's life, but also the lives of my soldiers and almost 50,000 civilians... If you're lying, I can technically execute you according to military law."

The mother gritted her teeth and replied in equally serious tone, "I have proof, there should be records inside the hospital. My son, Lee Xia Ya, and my daughter, Lee Sai Na, awakened into Homo Evolutis together with Xing Ling Amulo Rei, the son of Lieutenant Jacko. Rei was just piloting that Steel Ball!"

Asete looked into the mother's eyes for about 10 seconds before he turned around to order his soldier, "Get the maintenance crew to bring out the Black Star Trooper space armor prototype from

my personal collection. Have them fix it. I updated the weapons before we departed, and other than the space armor itself not being latest, the rest of the equipment can rival a level 3 space civilization... provided if the wearer is a Homo Evolutis...

"Activate that red space armor! The space armor with three times the power of normal space armors that was specially designed for the Chancellor!"

Chapter 458: We are Soldiers

Lee Xia Ya loved games too. The nine-year-old was quite famous in this field as well... or at least famous among his peers. However, his favorite genre was different from Amulo. His interest in space vehicle simulation was not big. Even though he had played it once, his result was only slightly better than normal human beings. His real forte was in shooters. Games like Black Star Trooper simulation battles, these he was king among his peers.

Lee Xia Ya idolized Black Star troopers since he was young, just like how children from Old Earth idolized superheroes. However, unlike the fictional characters from Old Earth, Black Star Troopers were real people, so that made the idolization process much easier. Lee Xia Ya had always hoped he would be one of the troopers, and the most powerful one at that.

Suddenly, the people around him and his mother told him that he could become a Black Star Trooper, no, he was already a Homo Evolutis. He could fight like a Black Star Trooper if he just put the Space Armor on. The only question was... would he do it or not?

Lee Xia Ya was stunned for five to six seconds before saying excitedly, "Yes, yes, of course I would do it. I want to be a Black Star trooper just like that big brother who saved everyone... I want to!"

The faces of the people around him were severe, while his mother started to weep, but she didn't stop him. She merely hugged his still unconscious sister and cried silently.

Asete told Lee Xia Ya seriously, "Then... I will assign you as the special member of the Defense Unit for now. Your Black Star trooper number will have to be personally confirmed by the Chancellor, so currently, this special number is your current number... This space armor is from the earlier generation, but its prowess is still better than that of most of the current space

armors. At the same time, it is at the level 3 space civilization and has a gun with 50 rounds of explosive arrow bullets and a light saber. The armor has an automatic adjustment system, so even though you're not tall enough, after you put on the armor, it'll automatically adjust to your height difference...

"Finally, I'll ask you again, do you want to become a glorious Black Star trooper?"

Lee Xia Ya raised his head and replied with his childish innocence, "Yes, I want to become a Black Star trooper..."

"Good boy. Now listen to your orders and put on this space armor," Asete nodded and left to select the soldiers who could fight alongside Lee Xia Ya well.

Along the way, suddenly another major-ranked soldier rushed over to grab Asete on his collar and yelled, "Have you lost your mind? He's only nine years old! Do you know what the hell you're doing? He's only nine and a Homo Evolutis, are you crazy? I will sue! I'll definitely sue you at the highest military court, you'll..."

"What will happen to me?!" Asete pulled his collar back and roared with his bloodied eyes, "What can really happen to me!? Tell me! There are several ten thousand people and soldiers in this base! We only have 25 minutes left! There are several ten thousand children under the age of 10! And two great scientists! How many great scientists do we humans have in total!? You tell me! And those several ten thousand children, what do you want me to do? Give them up?"

"I know this is unfair..." Asete pulled this major and told him seriously, "The cosmos is unfair! Only the best civilizations and races can evolve and survive. This war is humanity's biggest tragedy and also the best opportunity to showcase our best! He is one of humanity's children and he has the best bloodline among all of us, plus he is a Homo Evolutis and soon-to-be Black Star trooper. He is one of the chosen ones, so don't say anything anymore, have

faith...

"Because we can do it!"

Can we really? No one knows...

After Lee Xia Ya put on the space armor, he realized he seemed to have grown taller in an instant. The armor fitted him perfectly and he felt like the armor was an extension of his skin. The weirdest feeling was even as he moved, he didn't feel like he was lugging along a several ton metallic armor.

"Let's try it out," the maintenance worker beside him said. "There're four AI robots in the room, they will fire at you using paint balls. Feel free to evade or retaliate."

"Okay."

Lee Xia Ya excitedly accepted the paintball gun handed to him with as he ran into the testing field. There were, as the man said, four AI robots in the room. After the signal turned from red to green, the four robots started to disperse across the room and aimed their paintball guns at Lee Xia Ya.

Under these circumstances, Lee Xia Ya had completely entered his gaming state. He felt like he was in the middle of a tutorial. When the four AI robots fired at him, he started to move and turned to shoot at the robot nearest to him. However, unfortunately, since they both were running, neither hit.

At the same time, the group outside of the field sighed in unison. Asete said calmly but with disappointment, "Looks like he's not it... Black Star troopers would never miss..."

Suddenly, everyone saw that Lee Xia Ya abandoned the paintball gun and pulled out the light saber on his waist. He dashed at the robot nearest to him. As the distance closed, the robot aimed his gun at Lee Xia Ya. Just as the bullet was about to hit him, Lee Xia Ya suddenly swerved to avoid it and got into close range of the robot.

"...I can see it! I can see it! In that moment, time seemed to have slowed, yes, I'm a Homo Evolutis, I'm really a Homo Evolutis!"

Lee Xia Ya cheered internally, and the light saber tore through the robot's chest...

One minute and 42 seconds. Lee Xia Ya triumphed completely over the Ai robots. His agility, reaction time, and danger sense had reached S-grade Homo Evolutis level. Furthermore, he seemed to have an instinct for close-quarter combat because he could always find himself in the perfect distance to take down his enemy. This instinct was something most experienced Black Star troopers didn't show, and this shocked everyone in the room. They had unearthed a treasure.

After ensuring Lee Xia Ya's Homo Evolutis power, this special unit started to mobilize to head towards the biggest underground base. When they arrived, they were only 20 minutes away from the retreat time. Lee Xia Ya listened to his order and led his team to charge into the base.

The base was swarming with alien robots. They even learned how to ambush human troops, causing a great deal of damage to the Defense Unit. However, after Lee Xia Ya appeared, all the ambushers lost their purpose because he could sense danger. With a focus fire, these ambushers were free experience. The real headache was that the alien robots patrolled the base in large groups. The base was equipped with humanity's defensive features. That combined with the robot's fearlessness and technological difference, they were invincible.

Or at least until Lee Xia Ya's arrival. With the cover fire of his team, Lee Xia Ya rushed into the group. Admittedly, the boy was afraid before he rushed in, but after he did, his instincts took over. Lee Xia Ya in the red armor was like a killing machine. Since he was killing robots and not actual flesh and blood, this increased the sense that he was merely in a game. He didn't hesitate to cut down these robotic enemies.

With the whirlwind of Lee Xia Ya, the bases were saved one after another. A great amount of civilians were saved. However, when the last base was freed, the time was already past the limit of one hour... It was already 1 hours and 7 minutes. A large amount of alien spaceships were surrounding the base, and their speed was faster than humanity's guardian spaceships. It looked like it was... over.

"Damn!" Asete slammed on the table. Looking at the encroaching spaceships, he growled angrily, "Damn! If only we had a Space Combat Jet. With Lee Xia Ya's talent, he'd be able to... Now we have no choice but to cut our way out to liaise with the main fleet, but in that case..."

At this time, a major beside him who had lost his arm and whose face looked frighteningly white said, "Actually there is still another method... These robots are weird, they seem to be searching for something. After they take down a place, they will not leave before they completely scan the place. If there are people staying behind in this second defense line, they will not chase after you before the base falls completely...This way we can buy at least another 20 minutes of time."

Asete was stunned before saying, "You're right! We can send out all the AI robots to have them buy more time for us!"

"It's no use." The major smiled bitterly. "AI robots have no fighting capability. They can't last longer than five minutes, the only way is..."

The major suddenly turned around to look at the several thousand injured soldiers. "Comrades, brothers and sisters, do you mind staying back with me? To have our wives, husbands, sons, and daughters, our families, return to the City of Light Moon safely. Do you mind..."

"Staying back to fight until the last second like the heroes in the first defense line?! Answer me!"

The injured soldiers didn't say a word, there was barely a cough, but they struggled to stand silently. Even though some of them had lost their legs, they saluted in return.

The major laughed and turned to ask Asete, "Give us enough weapons and ammo. We don't need anything else... Also, there's no need for words, we don't have enough time. Have the AI robots bring us back to the second defense line, that's all I ask."

Asete's face was dark before he laughed in earnest. He saluted in return and said, "Hero, tell me your name."

"Hero, you say?" The mayor laughed bitterly. "I'm no hero, I'm just a sinner. I've caused my lovely wife's death; she's now forever asleep in that hospital. And I've caused my son's death; he's probably star dust now. I'm no hero, I'm just a lowly soldier..."

"I... just want to go meet my wife and my son to apologize to them in person, to tell them I love them. But before that, I have to complete my duty, my duty as... a soldier!"

Then the major ignored Asete and headed towards the hangar. Behind him, the soldiers followed him silently in their faltering steps...

All the AI robots in the fleet were given the command to follow this unit to set up final defense parameters around the space port. It would be manned by one thousand plus injured soldiers and several ten thousand AI robots. It was the final bulwark of the second defense line. It looked so fragile yet so strong...

1 hour and 12 minutes since the retreat mission started, the guardian spaceships left the second defense line, carrying with them 160,000 civilians, including 110,000 children...

1 hour and 26 minutes, the group of guardian spaceships reached their destination to liaise with the main fleet. With the help from the Black Star troopers, they left the second defense line...

1 hour and 39 minutes, the second defense line fell into silence. 1

hour and 40 minutes, the place exploded...

The fires and flames were like the burning promise, bright and fiery...

We are soldiers.

Chapter 459: Ambushed

"We're 11 hours, 42 minutes, and 31 seconds away from reaching our destination coordinates..."

Yao Yuan sat in the captain's room with his bloodshot eyes looking at the electronic clock. He had been up for two days and two nights already. It was not that he didn't want to sleep; in fact, he was already very tired, but the extreme nervousness made it impossible for him to even close his eyes for a second.

"Chancellor, you have to sleep now!"

Barbie stood behind Yao Yuan with tears in her eyes and a blush on her face like she had been crying, but she still carried herself professionally and seriously.

When Yao Yuan laughed bitterly and wanted to retort, Barbie continued, "You'll be joining the Black Star troopers in the war 11 hours and 42 minutes from now. To sleep or not is your personal freedom, and other people have no say to decide that for you, but please think about the soldiers who will place their lives and trust in you. As the main force of this ambush mission, if your condition is not at its top form, it might cost them their lives, so..."

Yao Yuan was silent before nodding. "Then I'll go lie down for a short 10 hours. Please wake me up in 10 hours... and if there's any emergency above C-grade, you have to wake me up as well. Good night."

Barbie didn't say anything but stood there quietly. Yao Yuan walked past her to head towards his own resting room. He was a qualified soldier and the best type of soldier. Resting during war was common practice, so no matter how anxious he was internally, he merely took 10 seconds after lying down to sleep.

Yao Yuan in his sleeping state suddenly jumped up in alarm and saw Barbie and two other military officers walk into his room. The

clock on the wall showed that he had been asleep only for two hours.

"What happened?!"

Yao Yuan slapped himself on his face and demanded forcefully. One of the officers saluted and answered, "Five minutes and 40 seconds ago, the enemy fleet was slowly catching up to the vanguard unit and they entered the prepared creator's particle layer thunder void zone as planned. The damage the thunder void zone caused the enemy fleet was more than 5,000 spaceships, which was 80 percent less than expected... However, the enemy fleet stopped moving and stayed inside the void zone. This was observable from the explosive sparks of the thunder zone and the range of the enemy's creator's particle coverage."

Yao Yuan thought about it and asked, "It has been five minutes and 40 seconds since then? The enemy still hasn't made any move? They didn't chase after the vanguard unit?"

The military officer nodded wordlessly.

Yao Yuan paced in his room anxiously. After 10 seconds he said, "Come, let's go to central command. This issue is crucial, we have to get to the bottom of this."

The core of the ambush tactic was the fact that the enemy would continue giving chase after they had locked onto a target. Before this target was taken down, they would not care about the others. Under these circumstances, it was practically impossible for the people from the second defense line to reach the City of Light Moon, because the travelling speed between the two space civilizations was too different. The enemy fleet would definitely catch up to the group of guardian spaceships...

However, it was also because of this that the ambush strategy was so important. If the plan failed, around 200,000 civilians and Defense Unit soldiers would be dead. They were using the enemy's relentless pursuit to lure them into this zone of ambush. At this

location, the 16 complete Black Star units and the remaining forces from the New Solar System first fleet would make a last stand against this unknown fleet...

The ambush was set up using humanity's final measure, the gravity cannon fleet...

There were around 140 specially designed gravity spaceships. They were smaller than guardian spaceships and didn't have any fighting equipment. All of their internal space had been switched out for energy systems, energy shield systems, and gravity cannon systems. In fact, these gravity spaceships were as slow as a normal spaceships the size of the Hope. They didn't showcase the agility of small-sized spaceships. Their main purpose was as the name suggests, gravity cannon focus fire.

In central command, a group of strategists were arguing. When Yao Yuan entered, they stopped arguing to salute the Chancellor.

Yao Yuan saluted them in return and immediately asked, "Brief me on the different possibilities. The possibility of why they stopped, where they're moving next, their possible destination, tell me everything."

Ren Tao and Xiao Niao stood among the group of strategists, but the duo didn't say a word, they merely had their brows furrowed looking at the 3D image in the room. One of the strategists began, "Chancellor, from our analysis, the biggest possibility is... that the AI fleet has reached the critical loss point of its mission.

"As we have predicted earlier, the fleet is in search of something, and before they find it, they will continue this strategy. They will not care about losses and will use the smallest attacks to preserve any buildings or fleets and will ignore all the other targets. However, that is until the fleet reaches its critical loss limit. In other words, when the AI feels threatened and believes their civilization might be destroyed, then the programming will change to self-preservation. The loss of these last few thousand spaceships

might have caused the critical loss limit for this AI."

Yao Yuan entered deep thought after listening to this analysis. In fact, this was the main conclusion the strategy group agreed upon, and he agreed with it. After all, a 1,800,000 spaceship fleet only had 1,000,000 spaceships left. The Energy Storm cannon at the second defense base was too powerful; it was practically a weapon from a peak level 3 space civilization. It caused the destruction of around 600,000 spaceships in one shot.

For any fighting force, the loss of half would be a limit point because this meant that the possibility of being wiped out had become higher...

Another strategist added, "There could be a different possibility, and that is because the fleet has reached critical tolerance. They decided to adopt a more conservative tactic when they discovered the zone of dark thunder. They might be waiting for the creator's particle zone to disperse before continuing to chase after the vanguard unit. After all, their technological level is so much more advanced than ours, and they are at least four times faster than us, so they'll definitely be able to catch up. Of course, there is also the possibility of a change of combat tactics..."

Yao Yuan nodded before turning to Xiao Niao and Ren Tao. "What do you two think?"

The two looked at each other and shook their heads. Xiao Niao furrowed his brow and said, "Currently, nothing yet. The two possibilities mentioned are quite plausible, but... it's curious, the leisurely manner of this fleet... In fact, from the simulation, they should have caught up to the vanguard around 40 minutes ago, so how do we explain this 40 minutes difference? Even though we do not understand why, there has to be something else that we do not know..."

Yao Yuan asked, "Is it possible that they've become cautious since they're reaching their critical point?"

Ren Tao laughed. "Do you think we're dealing with lifeforms? No, these are AI, such thoughts are impossible. There is no such thing as a critical point. Even if there is, they will process it according to their program, but this situation... is weirdly anxiety-inducing."

Yao Yuan knew there would be no clearer answer even if he pressed. He could only suppress his consternation and say, "Continue the observation. The main fleet... stay dormant. I'll continue to rest, and for now, everything moves according to plan."

Just like that, Yao Yuan lied down for another four hours. When he was woken up next, everyone's faces were like they had seen a ghost. He knew instantly something had gone terribly wrong... could it be that the vanguard unit had been caught?

"No, the AI unit hasn't caught up to the vanguard unit. In fact, the AI fleet has resumed heading towards the City of Light Moon, or in other words, heading towards the ambush line..." the report said.

Yao Yuan noted some of the curious information and asked, "The AI fleet is heading our way... what about the vanguard unit? What happened to them?"

In central command, as Yao Yuan asked that question, a 3D image appeared in the room, showing the location of the vanguard unit. There was a series of explosions on screen, displaying the fights that were happening there.

"Three minutes ago, the vanguard unit ran into an AI fleet around the size of 100,000 to 120,000 spaceships. They belong to the AI side unit. In other words, they were ambushed by the AI fleet..."

"At the same time, the main AI fleet has circled around the vanguard unit to head towards the City of Light Moon. According to the data analysis, they will reach the ambush circle in 1 hour and

17 minutes..."

Yao Yuan, who understood everything at that moment, had his eyes turn red instantly...

Chapter 460: Yes, this is the Final Battle

"Because space wars, or rather space wars involving level 2 space civilizations and above, have these few key points, and they are the combination of super long distance and close distance combat models. This means that super long distance attacks can only happen during the initial and end stages of the war. The rest of the time, the possibility of close distance combat is much higher than long distance or super long distance combat...

"At the same time, we should have paid focus to the enemy forces' movement as the creator's particle covered the battlefield. During battle, it is very possible for ambushes to appear because the ECS system is something that both sides are unable to dissect, or rather, hiding inside the layer of creator's particle is something we cannot crack. Be it ourselves or the enemies, waiting patiently inside the layer of creator's particle during the middle stages of a war could very well lead to a surprise victory..."

Humanity was a creature of war. The history of humanity is the history of war, or simply put, human history was written by war, be it on Old Earth or after humanity had entered space. The technological advancements in space always served the military and war before serving the people.

Similarly, the research into war strategies of a level 2 space civilization had started at least two decades ago. In fact, there were many famous writings on this. For example, Guang Zhen's "The effect of creator's particle and ECS System on war" and "Ambush for level 2 space civilization and above" written by another strategist. These were main courses for soldiers who joined the Barracks.

In central command, when everyone found out about the ambush, the first thing that crossed their minds was the ambush strategies mentioned in these writings. In fact, the reason they had decided to conduct an ambush there was because they were

inspired by the strategies in those writings, but who would have known they would get ambushed by the enemy first?

This AI fleet's combat formula had always been straight-forward, which was to overwhelm via numbers and give relentless pursuit to the target closest to them. They didn't show any signs of having a strategist mind. It was because of this that when humanity came up with their strategy, they used this data as reference. Even though someone had brought up the possibility of the AI being more sinister than they perceived, before the discussion could begin, the shot of Energy Storm near the second defense line had ended this conversation. Everyone believed fully that this AI fleet was one that only knew how to follow strict programming.

Therefore, this ambush was like a lighting bolt in the middle of the day, stunning everyone into disbelief. So this AI also knew tactics like setting up an ambush. They... were not dumb.

"The real dumb ones are us humans! If we always use our previous experience to predict our enemy's actions, we'll never learn. Damn, this is all my fault!"

Yao Yuan slammed his fist on the metallic table, and there were instantly bloody cuts on his fist. Barbie, who stood behind him, immediately screamed, "Get the medical unit over here... Chancellor, calm down, we're in a crucial time. If you lose your footing, it's really over for us humans!"

"But what about them?!" Yao Yuan growled angrily at Barbie. Several seconds later, he took a deep breath and apologized to her. "I'm sorry, I shouldn't have vented at you... but what about those people from the vanguard unit? It is because of my carelessness that they're caught in this state. I believe the AI fleet sent out this ambush unit before they moved towards the the second defense line. After the fleet intercepts the vanguard unit, the main AI fleet will be able to head towards the City of Light Moon without resistance..."

This time, Ren Tao, who had been silent, suddenly said, "But this is also an opportunity..."

"Opportunity?" Yao Yuan roared with anger as he glared at Ren Tao. There was a deep, murderous intent in his eyes, and he said chillingly, "You said this is an opportunity? Do you know how many people are in the vanguard unit? There are 200,000 people, including the Defense Unit soldiers and civilians. There are also six full Black Star units and two great scientists. They're now caught in a crisis, and you tell me this is an opportunity? Do you... want to die?"

Ren Tao scoffed with condescension. "You want to kill me? In what name? The singular voting power of the Chancellor? Or libel? If you want to kill me, then do it quick. If you won't, then listen carefully..."

"We all understand the importance of the vanguard unit, you don't have to repeat it so many times. I have to knock this into your head: the situation the vanguard unit is in now is not your fault, don't be such a saint and take on all the responsibility. Sending out the vanguard unit and setting up this ambush circle was the decision of the entire strategy department. If there's a party that's wrong in this matter, it'll be all of us and not only just yourself.

"Humanity is a civilization, a race, not your personal f*cking toy, and this is not a war game in your head!"

Yao Yuan stared at Ren Tao, who was as angry as a lion, with a stunned expression. This was the first time he had seen Ren Tao so angry. This man who had always been so quiet and kept to himself was so fearless at this moment. Other than fury, there was something else that Yao Yuan spotted in his eyes, something that wasn't there before... courage.

Ren Tao took several deep breaths before continuing viciously, "Where have you lost your cool and calm head? Where happened

to your courage that could sacrifice even yourself? Now... after sacrificing them, we might save even more people and even the whole of humanity! So where the f*ck is your courage?! Do you remember this one sentence that you said? I've forgotten the exact words, but the meaning was, if necessary, you would sacrifice anyone to trade for the continuity of human civilization, and that anyone includes yourself. You've been following that philosophy. We all have eyes, we can see your sacrifice and selflessness, or do you think the role of the Chancellor just fell on your head? Do you really f*cking think we're all slaves without brains? That we all like to put a god above our heads to pray towards it day in and day out?

"It's because of you! It's because you're Yao Yuan! It's because of your bravery and sacrifice, your leadership and hard work, that humanity is still alive today! Now, you wish to give up just because you've suddenly found your morality or simply because you unwilling to let your soldier friends go? You're going to give up on all of us just like that?!"

Yao Yuan slowly recuperated from his daze. He stood up slowly and walked to stand before Ren Tao. Everyone was scared for the man's life, but Yao Yuan merely patted Ren Tao lightly on his shoulders. "I understand, I see it now... Yes, it is as you've said, things should be that way. Since I can be sacrificed... then if necessary, they must be sacrificed as well, but you've forgotten one thing. This sacrifice cannot be undone..."

"I must use this AI fleet as an accompaniment to this sacrifice, no, that's not enough..."

Yao Yuan didn't say the rest but promised it internally. "Ol' Wong, Liu Bai, Ebon, everyone... please wait for me. After everything here is over, I'll be joining you in a bit."

"Give out the order. No fleet is allowed to move, stay where they are. The ambush plan is going to continue as usual!"

"Stop anyone, any ship from leaving this ambush circle. Anyone who does will be executed as a human traitor..."

"Do not allow anyone to use any ships or devices to save or contact the vanguard unit, or they will be executed as a human traitor..."

Yao Yuan continued to give several orders and then he told everyone present, "When we're one hour from the fleet reaching the ambush circle, wake up all the sleeping workers and soldiers. Start the last maintenance of all the weapons and equipment. Get the 16 Black Star units to start preparing, aim the Gravity Cannons at the designated coordinates, have the AI conduct one last simulated war..."

"This is the final battle!"

Following Yao Yuan's orders, the ambush circle started to mobilize, be it the Defense Unit or the Black Star Troopers, they prepared for the war silently. In fact, almost everyone knew about the ambush threatening the vanguard unit, and they knew they would receive news of the fall of the vanguard unit soon...

Everyone was silent, but the sadness and fury in their eyes were obvious. There had never been such a moment where there was merely fighting, combat, and death in these people's minds. There was fire, the fire of revenge burning through everyone's soul...

This is our home! We've been chased out of our home twice already! We've been forced to run like cowards twice already! This time... no matter what...

During preparation, a technician soldier suddenly asked a Black Star Trooper, "Sir, I'm sorry, but this battle... is the final battle already?"

The trooper was stunned before replying with a smile, "This battle..."

"Yes, it's the final battle!"

Chapter 461: Whisperer!

140 plus specially-designed gravity cannon ships, other than plasma reactors and energy shield generators, they had practically no other devices on it. For example, weapons and residential amenities. In other words, the whole spaceship itself was designed to fit the gravity cannon.

Each gravity cannon spaceship's firing range was about 3,400 kilometers around itself. In other words, everything within these 3,400 kilometers will be affected by the tidal force. In fact, the actual range of the cannon was 60,000 kilometers, but the 3,400 kilometers was where the real power of the gravity cannons could be felt.

The range of 140 gravity cannon spaceships could easily overlap the battleships, and each spaceship's 3,400 kilometers range would be expanded greatly. If the 140 spaceships were completely spread out, the range could cover a giant sphere of 2,000,000 kilometers in diameter. This distance is about five times the distance between Old Earth and the Moon!

However, this was just a theoretical number. It was impossible for each spaceship to align them so perfectly, especially during wartime. Therefore, the best practical range of these 140 spaceships was a sphere with a diameter of 400,000 kilometers, and this was already a very large space. If they could maintain this space long enough, demolishing the alien fleet was only a matter of time.

This was the biggest deciding factor for Yao Yuan to come up with the ambush circle. However, gravity cannon, while being humanity's sharpest spear, was not its strongest shield. This meant that they were incredibly fragile. If there was the slightest damage to any of its components, the cannon would be indisposed. The next issue was its amount of exhaustion. A gravity cannon required a large plasma reactor to supply it with energy. If the reactor was

isolated and built on top of a small meteorite, the meteorite would collapse under pressure. Therefore, gravity cannons were an extremely fragile weapons with great limitations; they couldn't be transported through long distance like other weapons.

In other words, the other half of this ambush circle's purpose was to hide and protect the fleet of gravity cannon spaceships...

"Sixth groups of spaceships in position, the seventh, eighth, and ninth groups will reach their positions in five minutes. The final preparations for the ambush circle are complete."

In a spaceship the size of the Hope, Barbie gave Yao Yuan the report on the current battlefield situation. Yao Yuan had put on his red space armor. He too was preparing for battle. From the calculated time, they only had seven minutes left before the real war began.

Yao Yuan nodded and said, "I understand. Then this is the final battle... You and all the non-combative units stay behind. At the same time, if it is discovered that... the ambush circle has failed, instantly activate the creator's particle and report the news back to the City of Light Moon and initiate the starlight plan."

Barbie in her professional outfit nodded and said, "I understand... Chancellor, no matter the result of war, I can only say... you are our best leader, the savior of humanity, the hero of humanity. Even if the war fails, even if the number of deaths is high, this is not your fault, you've done everything you could..."

Yao Yuan was silent for a while before laughing while ruffling Barbie's hair. "Thank you, I appreciate it. You also better go prepare. There are space armors for non-combative units as well. This war has strayed from our initial expectations, and I also cannot predict what will happen... Good luck." Then he walked towards his final destination.

Barbie stood where she was with her head lowered and her hair ruffled. Tears like pearls fell down her face...

Yao Yuan's attention was completely focused on what he was facing... Its height was about 18 meters and the sphere was completely covered in red paint. This was the final weapon created by Bo Li to face this war, the height of human weapon technology, the Steel Ball, the real Red Lightning.

It had three times the power output of the normal Red Lightning in terms of speed, energy, and weapon power. Its speed utilized the energy umbrella theory of a level 3 space civilization and was 6.4 times the speed of the Hope. This was a speed that was 2.2 times faster than AI main spaceship.

The weapons were not much different from a normal Steel Ball. However, since Yao Yuan was an All-rounder, the compatibility meant that the weapon output was three times the amount of a normal Steel Ball.

It also had three times the strength of normal energy shields. According to analysis, it was enough to shatter the AI fleet's main spaceship's energy shield. It also came equipped with a mini gravity cannon that could cause a tidal effect within a 604 kilometer radius. Bo Li also added a special feature to this Steel Ball that was absent in other Steel Balls, a warp drive engine that could support the Red Lightning in warp drive space for about two years...

This was Yao Yuan's ride for this war, Steel Ball, the real Red Lightning!

After Yao Yuan got into the vehicle, it was shot out into space by the projectile device. Yao Yuan still hadn't activated the Steel Ball. Even though the control systems had been improved several times over the past decade, the exhaustion was still huge. A normal Homo Evolutis could only pilot it for maximum one hour before falling asleep. Even for Yao Yuan, his maximum was only three hours before it would cause irreparable damage on his psyche.

"Come... you sh*ts, this is going to be your cemetery!"

In the darkened control room, Yao Yuan's eyes were burning with anger and fury...

At the same time, back at the City of Light Moon, almost all the civilians were mobilizing. 11 spaceships the size of the Hope and the Hope itself were getting reused. All the civilians and important equipment, documents, and supplies were relocated onto these 12 spaceships. The spaceships themselves were physically attached to each other using metallic chains to ensure they would space warp to the same location.

All the civilians were sad and in despair. In fact, many people had entered a state of no return. Some of them started to wail about the end of the world. Since there was no one left in the government to hold the fort, the human society was in chaos.

Lee Cheng Wen was spacing out in his own office, watching the 3D image of the vanguard unit being ambushed. He sighed under his breath when a group of men walked into his room. The leading personnel was a middle-aged man. He began powerfully, "Minister Lee, are you going to sit there and watch the government submerge into chaos?"

When Lee Cheng Wen saw it was Speaker Matt who spoke, he immediately stood up and said, "Mr. Speaker, is there anything I can help you with?"

Matt didn't tread on formalities. He pulled out a chair and sat down. "Minister, I've looked through the list of government officials who remained and you're currently the highest ranking officer. The vanguard unit was ambushed, so this means that Vice-Chancellor Wong Guang Zhen is currently indisposed. And the Chancellor himself is involved in the next battle, so in other words, you're responsible to overlook the government. Am I mistaken?"

Lee Cheng Wen tensed instantly, but he didn't show it on the surface. He merely smiled and replied, "Mr. Speaker, you're indeed

correct in your observation. If I may be frank, what is it that you wish for me to do at the moment?"

Matt nodded and said, "I wish for Minister Lee to immediately give an order to stop the spreading of rumors. Yes, freedom of speech is important, but everything has its own time! The war is not over yet, we still have the Black Star troopers and the Chancellor! We still have the hope for victory! Spread the rumors that humanity has already failed will cause chaos, and according to the constitution, that is totally illegal and they can be arrested and charged! I will call for the gathering of the representatives to support this decision, but I wonder if Minister Lee is willing to spearhead this motion or not?"

Lee Cheng Wen sighed internally and he was impressed by Speaker Matt. He said immediately, "Of course. After the House of Representatives has passed the motion, then I will start the action instantly."

Speaker Matt stood up and said seriously, "Then... let me see Minister Lee's action and decision-making skill. Also... stop looking at that video. I believe the Chancellor will return victorious. Ever since we left Earth, he has never let us down, and it will be no different this time!"

At the same time, in a mini engineering lab, a girl cried non-stop watching the video. Her eyes were bloated from tears. This girl was Yue Xuan. When she found out that her boyfriend, Yun Si, was part of the six Black Star Troopers which made up the vanguard unit...

"Yun Si... Yun Si, don't worry, I will definitely take revenge for you... I will!"

Yue Xuan rubbed her eyes and stood up. As she wept, she made a call. Sometime later, a voice said, "Hello, this is the police station, how can I help you?"

Yue Xuan spoke through her tears. "Help me transfer this

message to the human government highest official or the remaining Black Star Troopers or even Professor Bo Li... I'm the hidden Whisperer, the Steel Ball's control system...

"Was created by my hands!"

Chapter 462: Start of the Final War! (1)

Within the darkness of the Steel Ball, Yao Yuan closed his eyes to concentrate. A feeling deep within his soul started to overwhelm him. It had been decades since Yao Yuan became a Homo Evolutis. The HE Research Center was not the only one that had been trying to figure out the mystery of Homo Evolutis, Yao Yuan himself had been doing his personal research.

First, he was an All-rounder or an Immortal. From both Blue 6 and the space merchants' information, Immortals should have all the skills available to Homo Evolutis. However, in reality, he didn't have access to the powers of the Whisperer, Anima, or Deceiver. In fact, these three types were the rarest Homo Evolutis.

Since he didn't have access to these three powers, he didn't know how they worked. In the past few decades, he instead focused on understanding the machinations of the Perceptor, Seeker, Diviner, and Thinker. In comparison, his mastery of Diviner was the greatest. This was caused by the natural environment of the cosmos, which heightened the sense of danger within everyone.

Diviners had the strongest sixth sense among all the Homo Evolutis. Their sensory attunement to danger was already beyond scientific explanation. For example, Zhang Heng's power could even be used in gambles, and Eva's Diviner power could look into the future.

In the past few decades, Yao Yuan had found more ways to utilize the Diviner power. Of course, he wasn't a real Diviner. He might have the power, but the strength of that power was not greater than Zhang Heng's. Regardless, he still found out that his Diviner power was the strongest when his heart was quiet and collected. When he calmed down, he could feel a large space expanding around him with him as the center. Within the range of this space, his Diviner power had an increase in efficiency, and this was the greatest reward he had discovered after the decades of training.

Yao Yuan was doing exactly this right now. Suddenly, he felt something, "something" had trespassed into his space. The next second, he peeled his eyes open, and the moment he did, the moment his consciousness returned, the control system of the Steel Ball, Red Lightning, was activated and his consciousness took over the whole vehicle.

Then the Steel Ball, Red Lightning became a flash of red light surging through space. Its speed was unimaginable. It took less than a second for the machine to fly past all the Space Combat Jets and rush into the middle of the enemy ranks. Following the rain of sparks, some of the enemy spaceships started to phase out of their ECS systems. Then there was a series of explosions.

At this point, all the battleships from far away started to focus fire. A large amount of energy beams swept the battlefield. Several ten thousand alien spaceships were shot down and a majority of them were exposed. The minute their energy shields were activated, their locations were exposed.

Taking advantage of this situation was the Black Star Troopers. There were 16 fully attended units and 160 latest Space Combat Jets. They mobilized from their hiding places and moved towards the battlefield.

The beginning of the final war began thusly. The whole fleet started to head towards their designated location according to the ambush plan.

At this time, several rays of extremely bright, purple light came from the enemy fleet. The rays were thin, rather similar to the super long distance particular condensation beam used by the Steel Ball, but the brightness had reached a state where it couldn't be viewed by the naked eye. In fact, it was close to the brightness of the Energy Storm. After the light ray was shown, in its arc was a ripple in space that was observable... the collapse of space!

After the shiny purple light, all the Homo Evolutis, ship captains

and battlefield observers looked at the aftermath of this light ray with awe and shock. The space where the light had just arced through was... empty! The space annihilation effect, this was the maximum effect when the space distortion technology was pushed to its limit mentioned by Professor Silewei. This was the strongest plasma weapon owned by a level 3 space civilization. Similar to how the Requiem cannon, the strongest weapon of a level 2 space civilization, could harm a level 3 space civilization, this weapon was strong enough to harm a level 4 space civilization.

The AI fleet finally showed its claws. This was the peak of a level 3 space civilization, this was the stage humanity needed to spend at least another ten thousand years to arrive at, the dream of many level 2 space civilizations, the dream of being closest to becoming a level 4 space civilization!

Yao Yuan's heart flashed with despair. At that moment, his danger sense was at the highest it had ever been. If he delayed for another 0.1 second, he would become star dust. Even though he had survived the attack, the shot still took down at least one-fifth of humanity's gravity cannon spaceships. The gravity cannon required at least three minutes to charge, more than enough time for the alien fleet to annihilate them.

Yao Yuan's both eyes were red. Now was the time to put his life on the line. He controlled the Steel Ball to approach three Space Combat Jets that were painted in dark purple. When he entered their creator's particle range, he said in a hurry, "Xiao Niao, I need your unit to cover me as I get close to the enemy's mothership. This has to be done." Then the Steel Ball disappeared with a blink.

In the next ten seconds, Yao Yuan had liaised with at least 30 Space Combat Jets. With him as the center, the unit drove into the centre of the enemy fleet. Sparks and explosions happened along the way. In just several minutes, there were only 20 plus spaceships left in this group.

Yao Yuan's heart was bleeding internally. These were Black Star

troopers whose lives were lost. The fact they were cosmic adapters aside, they were comrades from the same unit. After decades of training together, they were as close as brothers. They were family forged from a bond via blood. No one felt the pain of their deaths greater than Yao Yuan, but... behind them was their home. If the sacrifice could be traded for peace, then...

"Comrades, wait for me in the other life... I'll be coming soon."

As he roared, the Steel Ball, Red Lightning rushed towards a mothership, shattering its energy shield following a shower of lightning and spark...

Chapter 463: Start of the Final War! (2)

Steel Ball, Red Lightning was three times the power of a normal Steel Ball and 72 times the power of normal Space Combat Jet; it was almost as powerful as a guardian spaceship. It was a scary thing having so much power within such a small body. This not only required the energy technology of a peak level 3 space civilization, but also the metallurgy of a peak level 3 space civilization. At least this was a technology currently unavailable to this AI civilization. Humanity was lucky enough to come across the alien plant, which produced such alloys, or else designing the Steel Ball would've been impossible.

The moment Yao Yuan entered the energy shield of the enemy mothership, the surface of the Steel Ball was instantly covered with three times the amount of weapons a normal Steel Ball would have. In just the blink of an eye, the side of the mothership facing the Steel Ball was coated in fire. At the same time, a large light saber appeared around the Red Lightning as it rushed towards the mothership.

When everyone saw the Red Lightning next, it was 20 seconds later, and the gigantic enemy mothership was starting to explode and collapse in sequence. This was the most powerful weapon available to man, a trump card alongside the Gravity Cannon...

But... there was only one Yao Yuan and only one Steel Ball, Red Lightning...

As the group covered Yao Yuan on their way to the second mothership, several rays of purple light shot at New Solar System's first fleet. After another space collapse, nothing remained...

"F*ck, f*ck, f*ck..."

In a main ship the size of the Hope, Barbie was shedding tears like her life depended on it. Her face was covered with snot and tears, completely unlike her usual collected, aloof, and professional

image. At that moment, she was as helpless as a child, sitting with tears in her eyes while watching the 3D image of the war before her. The intensity of the war was much greater than she expected. The war epic movie produced by mankind was only 1/10000 percent its actual intensity. Lives were disappearing one after another before her eyes and despair was spreading, but she couldn't do anything...

"You have to win, Yao Yuan, you have to... If there is a God, please hear my call, please let Yao Yuan win..."

This prayer, or rather, cry of desperation, was spreading throughout the battlefield and even the City of Light Moon. In fact, even among the vanguard unit whose fate was an unknown, most people were feeling the touch of the same despair. Some were staunch believers of faith, some were atheists, some were strong, some were weak, some were cowardly, some were fearless, but everyone had the same thought on their mind... Yao Yuan, you have to win.

For some inexplicable reasons, perhaps it was illusion from exhaustion or really something did happen, Yao Yuan, who was piloting the Red Lightning, suddenly felt refreshed. Technically, the exhaustion from piloting the Red Lightning was much greater than piloting a normal Steel Ball. It should've been around now that he started to feel tired and light-headed, but in contrast, he felt energized... perhaps this was just another illusion before fainting, Yao Yuan thought bitterly.

"In any case, let me fight it out before I collapse!"

At the same time, among the sea of spaceship debris, the vanguard unit was still struggling to stay alive. In fact, both Yao Yuan and the military at the City of Light Moon had guessed wrongly. The vanguard unit wasn't ambushed, more accurately, this was a contact battle. The vanguard unit had stumbled across the enemy unit who was hiding. This enemy unit appeared more like they were waiting for deserters and not a whole main fleet.

"What? They're changing directions?" Guang Zhen asked in a roar.

Before him, several observers answered darkly, "Yes, Commander, from the calculations provided on screen, the fleet's trajectory has gone way beyond the ambush circle. Their target is... the City of Light Moon!"

Guang Zhen gritted his teeth angrily. He paced left and right before ordering, "Send out this order: have all the Black Star troopers return to the main ship immediately to conduct a final maintenance and energy recharge. Have them rest for 30 minutes. At the same time, order all the battleships and guardian spaceships to halt the movement of the enemy fleet. Get them to stop the enemy from heading towards the City of Light Moon, no matter what. Tussle with them for at least 40 minutes. This is the order from the highest commander. Then... tell them to follow my ship!"

Back in the City of Light Moon, Yue Xuan was taken by the military-use hovercraft towards the Hope under the protection of two Black Star troopers. In just several minutes, Yue Xuan found herself standing at the entrance to Bo Li's lab. She got down from the craft and took a deep breath. She tapped herself on the face and told herself under her breath, "You can do it, remember, revenge!" Then she moved into the lab.

Inside the lab, several hundred workers and engineers were busy recording and calculating stuff. In the middle of them, Bo Li was ordering an AI robot and a bunch of people around her to build something. When Yue Xuan got closer, Bo Li said directly, "You're too late now, I don't need your psychological control system anymore... at least not until this war is over, you sinner of mankind..."

Yue Xuan's tears fell down immediately. She bit on her teeth until blood flowed out of the corner of her mouth. Several seconds later, she forced herself to say, "I know, I understand... but it's not too late. I have another weapon that we can design to add to the

war...

"I've already finished the design. I only need to perfect the design for the energy source and the ammunition, and those are your specialties. The name of the weapon is...

"Psychokinetic floating cannon!"

Chapter 464: Gravity Cannon... Gravity Cannon!

On the battlefield, Yao Yuan didn't know there was an enemy fleet heading towards the City of Light Moon, and the loss of the vanguard unit wasn't as large as he expected. In fact, the vanguard unit had been fighting.

The battle at the ambush circle was reaching its critical moment. In the Black Star Troopers' death march led by Yao Yuan, even though there were only 100 plus of them, the amount of damage they could create was enormous. They were practically unstoppable as they overwhelmed and collapsed the enemy fleet.

Space Combat Jets with explosive arrow bullets that could burrow through energy shield, especially when piloted by Homo Evolutis, were undefeatable by any spaceships from level 3 space civilizations. If not for the great difference in numbers between the two, even though these spaceships were from a peak level 3 space civilization, the group of Black Star troopers would be able to destroy them easily.

It was due to the Black Star troopers' superhuman combat capability and the cross-generation weapons designed by a Whisperer that the result of the battle could be so wonderful.

However, the enemy wasn't as weak as they hoped. After all, they were a giant spaceship fleet from a peak level 3 space civilization. Their number was about several ten thousand times the number of human spaceships. Since the battle started, in just several minutes, the Black Star troopers had lost more than 30 members, and as the battle continued, in the foreseeable future, the number of fatalities would only continue to increase!

Similarly, the New Solar System first fleet, who were stationed far away, as well as the gravity cannon spaceships who had been hiding, also suffered great losses. If this was a conventional war,

humanity was already on the losing side. If there was no trump card or tactical weapon, then the complete wipe-out of humanity was only a matter of time... Even with Yao Yuan's Steel Ball, Real Lighting or more than 100 Black Star troopers, the result wouldn't change.

Yao Yuan wasn't dumb, he hadn't lost his sense. The reason he opted for this ambush that was like using an egg to fight a rock was because of humanity's biggest trump card... a trump card that was able to change the direction of the battle in a moment, the gravity cannon!

At that moment, all the gravity cannon spaceships were hiding in ECS systems. They didn't attack the enemy. In fact, even after they were attacked, they didn't move from their positions. They suffered their deaths patiently. The leaders who controlled these gravity cannon ships were beyond anxious. The fulcrum of the war was heavy on their shoulders. If they made a small mistake... then the history of humanity would be over!

Perhaps the citizens at the City of Light Moon could still warp away, but after losing 90 percent of the Black Star troopers, almost all the Defense Unit soldiers, the space combat jets, all the military experts, and humanity's greatest leader and his successor, the fate of the survivors was dim. Whether they could survive in space after this was an unknown. At least... the hope of becoming a middle-tier space civilization was impossible, and the renaissance of humanity... would be hard to achieve!

"Fast! Quicker!"

Finally, after waiting for second minute, which felt like ages, the charging of the first gravity cannon was completed. After that followed the second ship, third ship... in less than several seconds, all the remaining gravity cannon spaceships were fully charged. Then, following the decision that was made earlier, all the gravity cannon reexamined their target and then...

All the cannons fired at the same time!

The widest area of effect attack was unleashed! The overlapping of the effect zones caused heavy gravity tidal effects!

When the gravity cannon was used, the whole battlefield was shaken by an unusual push and pull of gravitational forces. This was not something the creator's particles could conceal. These curious points of gravity appeared at several hundred locations all over the battlefield. Each point of gravity was equal to the gravitational force of a small planet. This was made even scarier by the fact that there were hundreds of them active at the same time.

Middle to large spaceships definitely couldn't get too close to too many small planets at the same time; this was a truth most low tier space civilizations understood. This was because no matter the shield, be it electromagnetic, energy, or even a middle-tier space civilization's space distortion shield, they couldn't withstand the most common force in space. It would be fine at a distance, but if they got too close, it would be a tragedy because the tidal effect caused by the ship being affected by the gravitational force at different points would deconstruct the ship immediately!

This was common knowledge in space, just like how everyone back on Earth knew that a day consisted of 24 hours each day and 365 days a year. The enemy might've been an AI, but this didn't mean that they don't have such common knowledge. After the AI had taken over all the technology, knowledge, and information of its creator, how could it not know about the scary consequence of wandering too close to too many points of gravity?

Almost the moment the fleet of gravity cannon ships used the gravity cannons, the mess of light rays covering the battlefield stopped completely. Other than the human fleet, who was still attacking. The several ten thousands AI fleet had completely stopped attacking. Then all the spaceships started to turn with the highest speed to head towards the edge of the battlefield, away from the zone of the gravity fields.

Of course, that wouldn't be so easy!

They were in the middle of the ambush circle!

For this battle, for this ambush circle, for this moment, humanity had given up so much; cosmic adapters, Defense Unit soldiers, vanguard unit and even several million civilians... All these sacrifice was for this moment, wasn't it?!

When they were hiding in the ambush circle, the coordinates of the gravity cannon ships was already calculated. Each coordinate was recalculated and recalibrated again and again. To prevent the possibility of friendly fire, this had to be done. This was the most scientific way of conducting a war. The location of the gravity cannon ships had covered the whole battlefield in layers.

Even though they had lost one-third of the ships, this didn't create such a big weakness in the formation of the gravity fields. The AI fleet was already trapped within the ambush circle, so leaving such a large gravity field was not going to be easy, at least not something doable within seconds or minutes. In that stretch of time, the gravity cannons were enough to send them into hell, to return them to the state of star dust!

As humanity expected, when the AI fleet started to escape, in just 20 seconds, the first spaceships to deconstruct were those enormous motherships. They were torn open by the tidal effect of gravity. Such a sturdy mothership, one that even Yao Yuan's Red Lightning was unable to lay a scratch on, was torn open like paper before everyone's eyes. Then their energy systems exploded in space.

Several ten thousands alien spaceships of varying sizes were crumpled by an imaginary large hand. As they turned around, every second there was a new spaceship being torn open. This was not one point of gravity but more than a hundred points of gravity layering on top of each other. The loss of gravity cannon ships from the previous attack caused the gravity field to be uneven in

gravity distribution, but this in turn had sped up the collapse of the alien fleet.

After they managed to turn around, the amount of spaceships that had been deconstructed was more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of their total number. The remaining spaceships were mostly extremely small-size battleships or combat jets. Even they were affected by the gravity field. However, the biggest damage that came to them was from the explosion of the large spaceships. These small-size battleships had weak shields, so when they were caught in both the gravity field and the explosions of their bigger counterparts, they collapsed fairly easily...

The whole AI fleet was over. The fleet that was large enough to steamroll humanity in just several minutes had been reduced to about 10 percent of its original size after the gravity cannons were fired. The gravity cannons took less than several minutes to bury these spaceships from a peak level 3 space civilization. The human beings who operated these gravity cannons were in shock. Many of them still hadn't recovered from the sight they saw. It wasn't until later that their shock was replaced by euphoric joy...

Victory!

Humanity had won!

Chapter 465: Not Over Yet!

"X136, Y762, Z7124 discovery of straggling enemies. Nearby Black Star Troopers, please take care of them..."

It had been 20 plus minutes since the ambush circle had been set. Even though the war was considered over a few minutes after the gravity cannons were used, there were small amounts of battleships that continued to escape from the ruin of the AI fleet, and the cleaning up process had been going on until now.

On the other hand, the coverage of the creator's particle was huge. They would need more than 30 minutes to clear up the zone. In that period of time, the first fleet couldn't do anything, so they occupied their time with cleaning up the enemy forces.

Yao Yuan had returned to the ship. When he came down from Steel Ball, Red Lightning, his whole person was drained. His breath came fast and quick and his face was as white as a sheet of paper. However, that was all he suffered, which surprised everyone, even himself. He didn't even need support as he descended the Red Lightning. This shocked the medical crew that was stationed outside the Steel Ball. After all, during the previous experiments, Yao Yuan had almost fainted when the door opened. How come he was still so energized this time? Could this be his last radiance like what happened to Jay and Eva?

"What nonsense." Yao Yuan chewed on space food as he grumbled at the group of people around him. The mental exhaustion this time was much smaller than expected. However, for some reason, the physical exhaustion was more serious compared to before. It was as if the mental exhaustion had been swapped out for physical exhaustion. He did almost faint when he exited the Steel Ball, but it was from hunger, not mental exhaustion. He started eating the moment he exited the vehicle, but until now, the feeling of hunger still hadn't dissipated.

Barbie looked at the mountain of food before him with worry in her eyes before adding, "The statistics of the ambush circle are already out. So far, there have been almost 3,400 spaceships of varying sizes that have escaped the ruin. The largest among them was a guardian spaceship, the smallest was a scouting ship. Currently, we are unclear on how the AI is reacting. Some of the technicians predict that it is a mothernest-type AI. They hope the military can salvage the ruins for at least three complete CPU chips..."

Yao Yuan ate his food and contemplated the result. Several seconds later, he shook his head. "Those are details for after the war, we don't need to worry about them for now. After all, this is space; there will be no weathering and no one else is going to destroy them. Our current focus shouldn't be salvaging but trying to establish contact with the City of Light Moon to stop them from space warping. Then we need to search for the AI fleet who ambushed the vanguard unit to stomp them out... This AI ruin is our spoil of war after sacrificing so much. The information, technology, materials, and even part of the spaceships will be salvaged after this, there's no need to rush."

Barbie didn't say anything in return but quietly recorded what Yao Yuan said. She finished her job as the secretary before watching Yao Yuan munch on his food. As she watched him, her tears suddenly started to fall, making Yao Yuan not know how to handle the situation.

"Wonder, wonderful..." Barbie wiped away her tears with the back of her hand as she said, "This is wonderful, Chancellor, we've won..."

Yao Yuan watched her cry with shock before he smiled. "Yes, we've won... we humans have won..."

No, that was untrue...

Several minutes later, after the nearby creator's particle had been

cleared away, the New Solar System first fleet managed to make contact with the City of Light Moon, but this contact... casted a sense of gloom over everyone.

"The AI civilization's first fleet is only three hours away from the City of Light Moon. Currently, the human vanguard unit is tussling with them, but... the vanguard unit has suffered too many losses, and the shuttle with more than 50,000 civilians has been captured by the AI unit. Their fate is currently unknown..."

Back in central command on the spaceship, all the captains of the first fleet were connected to the room virtually through 3D images. Almost all the surviving Black Star Troopers were also present in the room. They all looked quite tired, but they still stood in perfect attention.

Yao Yuan looked at everyone and said, "That is the basic situation. The City of Light Moon is in a big crisis. Since almost all the units have left the city to engage the enemy, the place is practically undefended. The Black Star Troopers who remained at the city number less than 20 and the Defense Unit soldiers less than 600. Even though the city has many defensive measures and cannons, there are not enough people to man them... so I don't think they can hold this AI fleet for long!"

Yao Yuan took a pause before continuing, "But luckily... the vanguard unit is still fighting. Yes, they have suffered great losses, but they haven't given up, they are still trying to hold the AI fleet. They're waiting for rescue, waiting for the main force... we're that main force! We're the trump card deciding the ultimate fate of this war!"

"When we're discussing, I've already given the orders. Other than the four units... which only have several members left, and several guardian spaceships who shall remain to aid in rescuing survivors and cleaning up the ruin, all the remaining units will head towards the City of Light Moon. I need everyone to start preparing for battle."

The war meeting was short. After Yao Yuan gave the orders and explained the situation, everyone dispersed to carry out their responsibilities. Frustration and worry was written on everyone's faces combined with the tiredness from the battle they had just concluded.

After all, this concerned the City of Light Moon! Everyone's families, friends, and even children were located there. It was humanity's home and the place that truly belonged to humanity. If the place was to fall... it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say half of the soldiers would commit suicide... Yes, perhaps after losing Yao Yuan, perhaps after losing the battle, humanity would be caught in a quandary, but if they continued to proceed, to carry on step by step, they might one day return to glory. However, if the military lost the civilians situated in the City of Light Moon, what awaited humanity was extinction!

The military fleet who was ecstatic from winning the war dampened greatly after learning of the situation with the City of Light Moon. They couldn't wait to warp to the City of Light Moon, but realistically speaking, that was impossible. The cosmos was huge. Their distance from the City of Light Moon would take more than 18 hours of travelling, and this was travelling at maximum speed, an endeavour that could cause irreparable damage to the spaceships. In contrast, the enemy ships only needed three hours to reach the City of Light Moon, so the biggest issue was speed...

"That's not true, we don't need to wait idly for 18 hours. We have a combat vehicle that can reach the City of Light Moon before the AI fleet..."

Barbie followed behind Yao Yuan as he headed towards the hangar. This was what Yao Yuan said along the way.

Barbie was shocked as she ran to catch up to Yao Yuan, "Huh? This is a new design by Professor Bo Li? How many soldiers it can carry at once?"

"Just me alone..."

Yao Yuan reached the hangar and pointed at the red Steel Ball sitting there. "I alone, with the aid of the Red Lightning, will be able to reach the City of Light Moon at the same time as the enemy fleet. This is the only way we can intercept the enemy fleet!"

Barbie was startled before exclaiming with worry, "Chancellor, you cannot do this. Even if you arrive at the City of Light Moon, without the cover of the space combat jets, how are you going to face up against several ten thousand AI spaceships and motherships? This is..."

"Crazy? Suicidal?" Yao Yuan chuckled as he walked towards the Steel Ball. Along the way, he said, "I've achieved the awareness from the moment I joined this war. In fact, all the soldiers... the people who are here, which of them do not have this awareness? For the heroes who sacrificed themselves at the first and second defense lines, for the vanguard unit who is still fighting, for the 50,000 civilians who are captured... I'm prepared to die for them!"

"That is our home! It is only fair for a man to die protecting his home. It is no reason to cry..."

"As long as the survivors cheer for their victory!"

Several minutes later, a red flying vehicle left the spaceship, heading alone towards the City of Light Moon...

Back on the City of Light Moon's several motherships, everyone was concerned. Even though they had just received the victory news at the ambush circle, they were facing another crisis before their eyes. The AI's first fleet was reaching the City of Light Moon soon. Even though it was not their initial number of several million spaceships, the number was still high, in the ten thousands. That was a number the City of Light Moon could not handle...

In fact, there were already representatives who handed in

emergency proposals to the committee to discuss the need of space warp...

"No space warp! We've won the war, the remaining forces is something our normal military can wipe out. Do you really want to abandon the heroes who have fought bravely for our victory for the sake of your own safety? Open your eyes because these brave souls are watching and judging us!"

This was the growl of an inflamed representative in the House of Representatives...

On the other end of the city, in Bo Li's lab, Bo Li and Yue Xuan were busy working on several large pipes. Both of them were covered with sweat, but their hands didn't stop...

Soon, soon, this weapon... was a weapon powerful enough to make up the numbers difference between humanity and the enemy. After the weapon was completed, humanity wouldn't be completely helpless when the enemy fleet arrived...

Psychokinetic floating cannon prototype 1 was scheduled to be completed in three to four hours!

Chapter 466: Final War!

Creator's particle...

This is a type of subatomic particle that will be discovered by space civilizations when they become level 2. Although, in reality, some level 1 space civilizations had encountered this particle, and they referred to it as "God's Particle" or something of that sort.

In fact, the existence of the creator's particle had created a new world in the sense that it had completely shifted how war was fought in space. There were no longer landslide victories between space civilizations from the same level. Specifically, during a war between a new level 2 space civilization and a peak level 2 space civilization, as long as the level of the warring parties was the same, then even the peak level 2 space civilization wouldn't have a landslide victory.

Results like the landslide victory the US had against Iraq back on Old Earth was no longer possible. The US' technology was only at most a decade more advanced than Iraq's. One decade was definitely not enough to cause a difference in level for space civilizations. Both parties should belong in the same level bracket.

The element that caused this drastic change was the creator's particle, a miraculous particle that could conceal all the electrical signals and communication signals of all low tier space civilizations. When the creator's particle covered the whole battlefield, both parties were practically blind. Under such circumstances, no matter how powerful the long distance weapons were, they would be useless. The creator's particle leveled the playing field unless it was a war between space civilizations of differing levels, such as the plasma weapons and shields of a level 3 space civilization and the electromagnetic weapons and shields of a level 2 space civilization. Such a difference couldn't be bridged by the creator's particle. Under other circumstances, it was merely a fight of numbers.

In such wars, if a party had trump cards that were beyond the civilization's level, like humanity's gravity cannon, then the tide of the war could be turned in an instant. Regardless of the enemy's numbers and strength, this was a cross-civilization killing machine. Furthermore, warfare didn't need great advancements in technology. It was, at the end of the day, a contest of firepower. This was why Bo Li and Yue Xuan were so determined on creating the psychokinetic floating cannon. If the cannon was created, then it would solve the issue of lack of manpower in the City of Light Moon.

In reality, other than these three war methods that ignored the creator's particle (one, the difference in civilization level; two, the overbearing power of trump card weapon; three, the weapon firepower), there was one more war tactic that ignored the creator's particle. In fact, this element turned the creator's particle to good use, in the sense that it only affected the enemy but not allies!

This tactic was the use of the Anima, one of the rarer type of Homo Evolutis. They could use a special kind of method to sense the presence of all lifeforms. This method was something science couldn't explain yet. The lifeforms that they sensed would appear in their sensory organs in a different manner. Normal lifeforms would present themselves as small orbs of fire and Homo Evolutis would be fireballs, but the exception was Yao Yuan. He appeared as the sun for all the Anima. These representations were also something science couldn't explain.

When an Anima used their power, they would act as a super-radar that ignored the creator's particle. So far, the limitation of the strongest Anima, Nian Xi Kong, still hadn't been discovered. She could easily detect the presence of human beings at the edge of the New Solar System and maintain communication with them. This communication went beyond light speed. With a focus of her mind, the message could be sent across the distance, defying all

types of limitations. It was a communication mechanism and surveillance mechanism that surpassed the creator's particle!

The research on how to employ the Anima's power in war had started about 10 years ago. All the military personnel, even the newest cadets, knew that when a space civilization had the power to ignore creator's particle, it would greatly benefit the civilization so much so that... this troop could challenge an enemy from a higher space civilization level!

However, there were plenty of limitations to this research. The most obvious one was the lack of Anima. Currently, there were only five human Animas, and among them, only Nian Kong and Zhang San had the ability to communicate through the soul web. The remaining three could only see the soul web fuzzily. The difference in personal talent greatly limited the militarization of the Anima.

When Bo Li and Yue Xuan were working on the psychokinetic floating cannon, Xi Kong was escorted to the lab. Currently, the City of Light Moon's political scene was maintained by three forces after Yao Yuan and Guang Zhen, the two main leaders, left. The three forces were the House of Representative, the government officials, and the military. The hidden leader for the military was actually Bo Li.

"I'm sorry to have called for you at a time like this."

When Xi Kong arrived, Bo Li didn't even raise her head to acknowledge her. She focused on the circuit before her while she talked to Xi Kong with her back turned. "But we need you here... I need you to use your power to check the location of the vanguard unit and the main fleet. Then achieve communication with them, best if you can find the strongest Black Star Trooper."

Xi Kong nodded silently. In reality, she was slightly afraid of Bo Li. Perhaps it was because she had a crush on Yao Yuan, or perhaps this was simply her nature. She would feel diffident around Bo Li.

Regardless, she followed her orders obediently and closed her eyes to enter the soul web.

As Xi Kong entered soul web to look for the battle units, Bo Li and Yue Xuan had their backs turned to her. Both of them were busy with their heads lowered. In fact, if anyone had seen them at that moment, they would realize that their faces were incredibly white, their hands were shaking imperceptibly, and their faces were covered with cold sweat. It was obvious that they were reaching the limitation of their Homo Evolutis power and they were close to collapsing.

In fact, when Yue Xuan said she had finished the design, she really meant the design part was done. She had only the design foundation and design model. The prototype, especially one that could be used on the battlefield, hadn't been tested yet. One reason was because she lacked the speciality support from Bo Li's expertise. Be it the energy systems, weapon systems, or material circulatory systems, they all hadn't been created yet. Secondly, she didn't have a high tech lab like Bo Li did. Both of these reasons greatly limited her Whisperer power. The fact that she needed to finish the psychokinetic floating cannon on such short notice was exhausting both Bo Li's and her life!

When Xi Kong found the Black Star Trooper nearest to the vanguard unit, she suddenly heard Bo Li's voice say, "The design is all here. All the parts and materials needed are on it. Build it following the design closely, use the alien plant alloy...

"Also, send both me and Yue Xuan to the hospital... to the emergency rooms for overexertion of Homo Evolutis power..."

After that, Xi Kong heard several crisp sounds like something heavy had fallen to the floor. She jumped with shock and left the soul web. She opened her eyes and saw Bo Li and Yue Xuan collapsed on the floor. The several workers in the lab immediately rushed forward. The situation was chaotic...

Xi Kong stood there dumbly, she was stupefied. After some time, she remembered the orders Bo Li gave her. With a grit of her teeth, she returned to the soul web. However, she didn't know what to say. She was too stunned to do anything.

She was surrounded by an empty space, endless, filled with darkness and loneliness. In this darkness, there were orbs of fire everywhere. She was surrounded by them, and among them was a small number of fireballs. The fireballs were about several million times more intense than the orbs of fire. They were the normal people and Homo Evolutis in the City of Light Moon...

With a turn of her gaze, she "looked" further. Several ten thousands orbs of fire were heading towards the City of Light Moon speedily. Occasionally, some orbs would blink out of existence. There, she saw more fireballs, and some shone so brilliantly.

But... the light of these fireballs added together was no brighter than the burning sun that was shooting through space. The sun lit up almost half of the dark cosmos. It was so glorious, so bright. Its presence was like hope. The sum of all the human orbs of fire and the fireballs barely reached 1/10000 of its brightness. That was... Yao Yuan!

As Xi Kong focused on that sun. Suddenly, a female voice, no, two female voices appeared in her soul web.

"Yun Si, you're still alive? [Sob] you're really still alive..."

"Yao Yuan... this is Bo Li."

Chapter 467: Last Preparation and Song

Xi Kong was shocked beyond belief. This was her soul web, so why would there suddenly be two other voices in it? From the sound of the voices, one belonged to Bo Li and the other Yue Xuan...

At this time, Bo Li's voice said, "Nian Xi Kong, both me and Xiu Yue Xuan are unconscious. We've entered your soul web, though I can't explain how. Regardless, we don't have time to waste. Help us gain contact with them. One is Yao Yuan, another one... can be Yang Yun Si. Quick."

Xi Kong didn't dare to dawdle. She immediately sought out these two people. Of course, perhaps it was her heart talking, but the first person she found was Yao Yuan.

Yao Yuan was resting his eyes in the Red Lightning. Even though his heart was anxious, like he yearned for the killing, his constitution still enabled him to close his eyes to rest. At least he appeared silent on the surface. He tried his best to preserve his energy as the Red Lightning shot through space.

Suddenly, a voice appeared in his mind. This was the power of the Anima, he knew that much, but when he heard the voice, he was shocked.

"Listen clearly, Yao Yuan. I'm currently communicating with you through Xi Kong's soul web. My physical body has collapsed, so this conversation can't persist for long... This Red Lightning, I've updated it with a special control system, a system I call energy particle flux. The moment the system is activated, the exhaustion it has on your mind will increase by at least 100 times, so you have to think about this clearly, you only have one chance..."

Yao Yuan was anxious, but he tried to calm himself down. After a deep breath, he said, "Definitely! Tell me how. Behind us... is our home after all!"

"Okay, the activation method is..."

Several seconds later, Bo Li finished, but the soul web connection was still active. After one or two seconds of silence, Yao Yuan said, "End this communication, this is very heavy on the mind... Also, we will win, I'll bring home the victory, so please rest well. Your... and everyone else's hard work, I've felt it in my heart!"

"...Okay, don't die. I'll wait for you..."

After the communication ended, for some reason, Yao Yuan felt a wave of calm wash over him. He was startled for about 10 seconds before he laughed self-deprecatingly at his saccharine feeling...

"Following this speed, actually, the Red Lightning will only catch up to the tail of the enemy fleet. Only three hours left? Hopefully, this energy particle flux is as amazing as you said it is!"

Yao Yuan nudged his neck and mumbled to himself before chuckling. Then he yelled, "Activate special mode, password... THE BEST!"

Following that, the interior of the Steel Ball started to change. The most obvious was the light, changing from white to red. At the same time, a robotic voice said, "Password is a match, pilot is a match... Do you really wish to enter Steel Ball's energy particle flux mode? After entry, the limitation of the system is six hours. After six hours, the Steel Ball will self-destruct from overdrive. At the same time, the strain on the pilot's mental pressure will increase by 14,700 percent."

Yao Yuan took a deep breath and answered, "Enter energy particle flux mode!"

The whole Steel Ball was then surrounded by a red energy flux that was visible to the naked eye. It was like the Steel Ball was wrapped in a layer of liquid. Instantly, the Steel Ball started to shine like a burning energy ball. Its already fast speed increased. Even though the degree of acceleration wasn't obvious, the Steel

Ball had surpassed six times the speed of motherships the size of the Hope, and the speed was still increasing...

After Yao Yuan's voice disappeared, Xi Kong immediately communicated with Yun Si. The moment the communication was established, Yue Xuan couldn't wait to yell out, "Yang Yun Si, you're still alive? You're really still alive..."

Yun Si was currently surrounded by a group of AI spaceships. The sudden voice in his head caused his attention to wander and he almost got hit by a bullet. He immediately swerved his Space Combat Jet around and roared, "F*ck, are you cursing me? Careful, I'll punch you out!"

"Yun Si, the prototype for the psychokinetic floating cannon is completed. I'm sorry, I had to reveal my identity to Xi Kong and the rest to get them to lend me their lab. Finally, the prototype is done, but since you won't have time to rush back for us to attach it to your ship, thankfully, the Space Combat Jets come with their own external attachment system. Therefore, we will use signal carriers to send the parts to you. This is the only one psychokinetic floating cannon that is designed based around your Homo Evolutis skill. I'm sorry, there isn't enough time to create more. Now, listen to me carefully, this is how you use it..."

Even though Yue Xuan had many things she wanted to get off her throat, Bo Li had given her an example earlier. So she removed the emotions out of her voice and only explained the important stuff to Yun Si. The reason she insisted that Yun Si use this cannon and not the stronger Yao Yuan was because... she and Yun Si had sinned, and this sin was not something that could be explained by reasons like fear, hesitation, and the sort. The conclusion was that they had sinned, and a big sin at that... She hoped Yun Si would be able to achieve a great result with this cannon to balance out his sin. This was her selfish desire and her biggest insistence.

Yun Si was startled. This conversation was too out of the blue for him. He knew about Anima, but he had no idea when Yue Xuan

became an Anima, so he asked immediately, "What's going on? Why can you suddenly talk in my head? Also, what is this psychokinetic floating cannon, how do I use it, how am I going to reach it... Hey, explain it clearly!"

However, the channel was already broken. No matter how hard he yelled, there was no reply. He gritted his teeth in anger. He swore that when he returned... he would definitely spank that Yue Xuan's butt and make her apologize to him!

But... psychokinetic floating cannon, the weapon modelled using two chopsticks. Was it really as powerful as she said? If that was true... then it was truly a wonderful weapon!

After the communication ended, Xi Kong sensed that the two female voices had left her soul web. She felt heavy in her heart, but it wasn't serious. It was akin to the heaviness one would feel after hours reading a book; it was manageable...

Then she also exited the soul web. Then she turned to inform the lab workers the instructions that she heard from Bo Li and Yue Xuan, to have them transport this thing after it was created... How Yun Si was going to receive it, perhaps it had to do with some kind of high level technology Yue Xuan designed. She was clueless about that.

When she explained everything, and as she walked to leave the lab, she suddenly noticed the expressions of these workers... they showed anxiety, sadness, anger, and depression...

(Perhaps I should do something?)

Xi Kong didn't know why this idea would come into her mind, but in that moment, she felt responsible, like this was her duty...

Xi Kong returned to the soul web. She looked at the orbs of fire around her and the fireballs that blinked out in the cosmos as well as the sun that was rapidly approaching. Finally, she looked at her own fireball, and in that moment, started to sing...

"That blue planet, in this dark space, it is the brilliant jewel in space...

"That is our home, our family, that is Earth...

"We've left our home, we're forced to escape, and death, loneliness, darkness surrounded our future...

"Warriors, and heroes, fearless on this path filled with brambles and sacrifice...

"Because behind you is our new motherland, our home..."

This was Xi Kong's new song. It was a tune she released after humanity arrived at the New Solar System. It resonated greatly with the people and sat at the top of the charts for an impressive two years. When Xi Kong sang the song, it reached into everyone's souls through the soul web. Instantly, everyone was silent. Even for those in combat, they listened to it while they fought. It didn't take away from their focus; in fact, they felt comforted. The Homo Evolutis who were at the verge of collapse due to the strain they were under felt like a waterfall of cold water had just splashed over their soul. It took away their fatigue instantly, and this was not an illusion, they did feel refreshed in person!

This was the song of the soul!

The song travelled across the entire New Solar System. No matter where they were, everyone heard this song. For many, tears exited their eyes immediately. In the House of Representatives, the few representatives who proposed the space warp suddenly started to cry. They collapsed to the floor and started to wail like helpless babies...

"...We're brave, we're hardworking, and we're kind...

"We'll never stop, never give up for life...

"For victory and for hope...

"Will definitely be ours!"

Chapter 468: Prior to the War... Intel

Sitting in the captain's chair, a tired-looking Guang Zhen commented, "So the Anima's song has this effect as well."

Ever since the war started, this was his third ship. Humanity had lost plenty in this war. Even though they managed to tangle with the AI fleet and successfully got onto the AI fleet's energy umbrella pathway, they were still behind the enemy. Other than the Black Star Troopers who managed to get into the middle of the enemy fleet, the rest of them were left far behind, unable to take part in this final war.

The biggest worry for Guang Zhen was the Black Star Troopers who had been battling for several ten hours already. Unlike normal human beings, when they used their Homo Evolutis power or focused fully in battle, fatigue would catch up to them easily. If their initial fighting score was 100, as time moved on, when they were fatigued, the score would lower to 50. Currently, human technology hadn't figured out a way to remove this fatigue. Drugs could temporarily solve this problem, but due to the side effects, the usage was banned.

Therefore, resolving Homo Evolutis' fatigue problem had always been the human medical community's biggest hurdle and issue. However, this problem was now handily resolved by a song. Furthermore, the song was not only effective to the Homo Evolutis but also all the human beings. This was truly an ultimate weapon for extended warfare!

"Alas... Xi Kong's singing is also done through Homo Evolutis, so she too will feel tired. If she can continue singing, then this war..."

Guang Zhen knew he was dreaming. He sighed, but before the thought settled in his mind, about 10 seconds after the song ended, another song began. The feeling the joy and relaxation that originated from the song was like a cold shower in the middle of a

hot day washing over Guang Zhen. It made him feel completely refreshed. Xi Kong had started singing a second song.

"Then again, she is also a child of man. This is a war that will decide the fate of humanity, so who wouldn't give it their all? At most she'll only be exhausted, but she understands her songs will change the tide of the battle..."

Guang Zhen sat quietly for a few minutes, feeling his spirits slowly soaring. Instantly, he ordered, "Wake up the batch of Black Star Troopers who returned. Also... get Xing Ling Amulo Rei into space as well. Tell him to join the battle with the Steel Ball. Have him move to the frontline with the highest speed. Tell him to aim for the high score and don't hold back. Let's get moving, people, this is the last battle... After this battle, I'll give everyone a three-month long holiday!"

As the commander of the Defense Unit and the vice-captain of the Black Star Troopers, Guang Zhen's promises definitely carried weight. Furthermore, he was a pure military person, so the daily training was horrendous. There weren't many holidays in a year. Both the Defense Unit and the Black Star Troopers actually had some complaints, so this three month holiday was a pleasant surprise.

Even though no one cared about holiday at that moment in time, when Guang Zhen said that, it was still welcomed with a glorious cheers...

In one of the rooms, Amulo was chatting excitedly with Lee Xia Ya. Sitting beside them were both of their parents and Lee Sai Na, who was sitting in her mother's embrace. Biting her finger, she glanced at the two boys as they talked about the effectiveness of long-range shooting compared to close-quarters combat. She couldn't find a lull in their conversation to intervene, and the little girl was quite annoyed.

At this time, a soldier suddenly knocked on the door to tell them

Guang Zhen's orders. The room turned silent instantly. Amulo's mother rushed to hug her son immediately. Even though she didn't say a word, the meaning of her action was obvious.

Amulo, though, claimed excitedly, "Mom, it's fine, the Steel Ball is safe. If I control it, I can clear the robot fleet in seconds. They won't be able to even lay a finger on me. Don't worry, I can do it!"

The mother's expression was a mix of pride and sadness. She slowly released her grasp on her son. She touched her son's face and said, "Rei, you've grown up so soon... you can make your own choice now. Your father has always wished for you to be a responsible young man, and you've done that... Go ahead then, my son, make us proud... go, but promise that you'll return safely." Then the woman's tears started to fall.

Amulo was in a panic. He tried to wipe away his mother's tears, but she was pulled up by Susan beside her. She took care of his mother and told him, "Go along, child, this is your destiny. Haven't you always wanted to be a Black Star Trooper? Go ahead, fight..."

Amulo nodded affirmatively before glancing at his own mother with worry in his eyes. When he realized his mother wasn't going to stop him, he ran to the soldier and got onto the floating shuttle. As the shuttle drove away, he didn't realize Xia Ya was glaring at him with envy...

At the same time, on the other end of the ship, Zhang San sat quietly by his bed, listening to Xi Kong's song. He appeared to be quite distressed. He didn't know how to sing. In fact, even though he was also an Anima, the most he could do was create a "roar" in the soul web. However, that not only wouldn't relax others, it would cause harm to people around him. Even though Anima were also Homo Evolutis, compared to Perceptors, Seekers, or even Diviners, he was horrible at combat. This made him feel completely useless, and that was not a good feeling to have.

Furthermore, the final battle was happening soon. The City of

Light, where his parents, friends, and lover resided, but what could he do? In order to protect him, his request to join the battle was rejected firmly by Guang Zhen...

"Zhang San, is this enemy fleet controlled by an AI?" Intel suddenly asked.

Intel had always stayed by Zhang San's side. When Zhang San was depressed, Intel was continuously calculating and analyzing something.

Zhang San was startled before nodding. "Yes, it's an AI-controlled fleet, so no matter how many of them we've destroyed, they will not be fazed. They're heading towards the City of Light Moon... and we have destroy them before they reach it!"

Intel's eyes glowed slightly before asking, "Is this City of Light Moon very important to Zhang San?"

Zhang San confirmed immediately, "Of course, that is my home. My parent and lover are all there. The City of Light Moon is more important than anything, even my life."

Intel's eyes continued to glow. "Zhang San, there are two possibilities from my analysis regarding the possibility of trading information with this AI fleet. One, this AI fleet has an internet connected AI computer. In other word, each chip is an individual AI. Even if we destroy all the motherships, the individual ships will continue to fight because that's how they're programmed...

"Two, this AI fleet has a cloud server system similar to humanity's mother AI. In other words, this is one or a few mother AIs, and they are responsible for controlling all the spaceships...

"There are only these two possibilities. The first possibility is more possible because when the creator's particle covers the battlefield, the cloud server system will lose its purpose and there wouldn't be flexibility in the programming. In other words, this sub-fleet wouldn't have been possible."

Zhang San was shocked. He looked at Intel for a long time before asking in a hurry, "You thought of all of this yourself?"

Intel's eyes shone. "Calculating... thinking, yes, I've thought of this myself... I, myself, seem to be a mother AI as well."

Zhang San had a hard time understanding him. He walked to face Intel and asked seriously, "Intel, tell me, why are you telling me all this? Tell me everything, okay?"

Intel calculated for several seconds before continuing, "It appears like I can overwrite the program of non-mother AI chips. That is why I've been analyzing the information trading system of this fleet. If this fleet is the second possibility, then there is nothing I can do, but if it is the first possibility, and each machine has its own individual chip, then I can use a virus to hack and overwrite their program. With enough time and power, as long as this fleet belongs to the first possibility...

"Then I can take control of this AI fleet."

Chapter 469: Last Length!

The creator's particle of the AI fleet had completely covered the City of Light Moon. This meant that the fleet would reach the city in less than 10 minutes and would attack it in less than five minutes. Under these circumstances, the City of Light Moon's defense mechanism had already been activated. However, due to the lack of manpower, the defense mechanism was full of holes, and it couldn't stop the AI fleet even if it tried. Therefore, the hope of this last war was squarely placed on the vanguard unit and Yao Yuan, who was rushing back.

Xi Kong was still singing even though one could distinctively hear the tiredness in her voice. In fact, there were already medical crews standing around her in the lab. Everyone looked at her with nervousness and worry as they knew she couldn't hold out for long.

Even though her condition wasn't perfect, her singing in the past few hours had helped immensely. The vanguard unit's Black Star Troopers hadn't returned to their main ship once for a recharge. They rushed deep into the ranks of the enemy team. This was the last leg, there was no possibility of turning back. The only way of turning back or resting was death.

Xi Kong's song was a great help to the troopers. Even though the war had dragged on for so long, they didn't feel any exhaustion. Their spirits were surprisingly high as they tried their best to stop this AI fleet from reaching the City of Light Moon.

Finally, after Xi Kong finished her latest song, there was silence for more than 10 seconds. The medical crew understood what had happened. Two nurses rushed forward to hold her and instantly, Xi Kong collapsed in their arms... She fainted.

At the same time, the lab workers had brought several three-meter-long metallic bars to the Hope's weapon carrier center

where the people there already stood waiting. When they arrived, the few metallic bars were soon launched out of the Hope and heading towards the battlefield. The speed wasn't fast as the carrier was equipped with normal propellers, so it wouldn't be taken as weapon.

About two minutes later, the metallic bars were salvaged by a hidden spaceship. The spaceship didn't stop and followed the greater unit to head towards the City of Light Moon.

Finally, when the cannons at the City of Light Moon started to roar, the front of the AI fleet had reached the the City of Light Moon. However, weirdly enough, they didn't attack the city. Actually, they suffered the defensive attacks from the city quietly as they started to land... Were they trying to take over the city?

The Black Star Troopers in the the City of Light Moon started to mobilize. They jumped into their Space Combat Jets to initiate a counter attack. Based on the advantage of Homo Evolutis and the Space Combat Jets, they managed to destroy half of the landing spaceships in mere minutes. However, the Black Star Troopers were soon distracted by the enemy battleships. Therefore... the landing ships started to land on the City of Light Moon!

When the vanguard unit's Black Star Troopers arrived, this was the scene that they saw. Everyone was anxious until their eyes were red. They couldn't wait to destroy all the landing ships in their sight. However, even now, the AI fleet still had a technological advantage over humanity. Furthermore, they also held an advantage in terms of numbers. There were several ten thousands battleships and more than a handful of motherships. In fact, the several ten thousands civilians were taken into one of the motherships, and none of the attacks from the Black Star Troopers could cause any harm to the motherships.

Under these circumstances, the vanguard unit's Black Star Trooper unit couldn't assist the people at the City of Light Moon even though they desperately wanted to. They were stopped by the

several ten thousands of the enemy spaceships. No matter how much they took down, there would be another spaceship to take their place.

Yun Si was one of the Black Star Troopers assigned to the vanguard unit. He piloted his own Space Combat Jet and continued to fight the war with the assistance of two other troopers. However... his heart started to breed despair. The numbers were simply too much. Could they really reach the City of Light Moon? Could they really destroy all the landing ships? Also, what about the people in the city...

"Wait... what is this?"

Yun Si suddenly felt something. It was not danger or some vision into the future. He just felt attracted to something in front of him, something that was deeply connected to him. The feeling was one of familiarity, like he had sensed this thing a long time ago...

"Yun Si, this is the field of my Whisperer power. The research regarding the mind and its psychology is more in-depth than Professor Bo Li's, right?"

"The mind is a special organ. The reason why the field is shrouded in mystery is because our science is still unable to explain it. With future advancements in science, when the day comes that we can analyze the mind fully, the power of the mind will be taken as part of the valid scientific focus..."

"Think about it, did prehistoric man understand what electricity is? They would see it as some kind of god power, but fast forward to modern times, electricity has been fully researched. It is the same with magnetism, is it not? These energies that we cannot see or touch will eventually be analyzed as the science continues to grow. It will be the same with the mind..."

"The power of the mind for each individual is different. Each human being, no, every lifeform has their own unique mind power, and this power is a constant written in their genes. There

might be little variations, like when the person is mad or happy. However, the mind itself is a constant. I call this number the mind power quotient."

"After we find out the mind power quotient of a lifeform, we'll be able to confirm its origin despite the change in its form, genes, or other changes, like radiation..."

(Yes, this is my mind power quotient. At the time, Yue Xuan had helped me analyze it; therefore, this thing must be...)

After this thought settled in Yun Si's mind, he retreated from the battlefield and closed his eyes to feel, to feel that connection. Thinking about the instructions given to him earlier by Yue Xuan, he started to "activate" his mind. He felt like there was something trying to escape.

(It's coming!!)

At a distance quite far away, around a large battleship over the City of Light Moon, several hundred minuscule light orbs suddenly surrounded it. The orbs glowed brightly, and in just an instant, the large battleship exploded into pieces. Then the small orbs disappeared into the flames and fire with incredible speed. Then several metallic bars slowly exited the flames. They rushed through the energy shield easily. All the stuff that stood in their way, be it guardian ships, battleships, canonships, landing ships, they all exploded.

(No, I can't see the bigger picture. Plus, this is quite mentally demanding. I have to focus on more than 10 targets at the same time... The number of targets can still increase because each light orb can take down one target, but I still can't do that yet... I should focus on 10 targets for now...)

After shooting the psychokinetic floating cannon twice, Yun Si felt a sharp pain in his mind like someone had stuck a needle into his brain. His hands clamped over his head. With a bitter smile, when he used the cannon again, he chose to narrow down his

range. However, even so, he still felt his spirit weakening. The exhaustion this cannon had on the mind was unbelievably huge.

By then, some landing ships had reached the surface of the City of Light Moon. Even though the cannons and the tanks on the surface of the city had taken down about 90 percent during the landing process, the numbers of the enemy fleet were simply too high. Some managed to survive the onslaught. The moment they reached the surface, a great amount of AI robots was vomited onto the city, and they started to disperse...

Despair, chaos, anxiety...

The battlefield had reached its peak. The vanguard unit was like ants on a hot pot. Everyone rushed towards the City of Light Moon like they were on a death march. The fatality of the Black Star Troopers increased drastically. Yun Si was still trying to use the psychokinetic floating cannon, and the people on the surface of the City of Light Moon fired at the AI robots. This was the war that would decide the fate of a race. This was... the final roar of humanity!

At this time, a red ball of light was fast approaching. It got closer and closer to the city...

Yao Yuan sat down in the seat. He took a deep breath and said, "Enter control mode. Password: Last Length!"

Chapter 470: Failure!

The red ball dashed across the expanse of space with incredible speed. The AI fleet only managed to fire at it twice before the red ball entered the ranks of the AI fleet. The landing ships seemed to be made out of paper when faced with the red ball. There was no spaceship left after the red ball arched past the skies of the City of Light Moon.

"It's the Chancellor. The Chancellor has returned to fight alongside us!"

Those who saw this red ball cheered and roared. Even though there was still fear and anxiety, they weren't lost anymore. This war, be it victorious or failure, they would fight alongside Yao Yuan, so they weren't lost anymore...

One had to admit that the energy particle flux system was incredibly powerful. This was another variation to use the super-powered energy shield. This super-powered energy shield was stronger than normal energy shields and it used a different manipulation of the particles to create an energy neutralization effect to enable the super-powered energy shield to phase through normal energy shields. Of course, this required an exhaustion of a certain amount of energy.

This super-powered energy shield was the peak of the usage of plasma shields. This was Bo Li's pride. Its technological advancement was on the same level as the psychological control system. However, when these two systems were used at the same time, the pressure on the pilot would be too high. Therefore, one shouldn't use them in tandem unless the situation desperately called for it.

Yao Yuan understood why the password was called "Last Length", it was the last length after all the other options ran out. When he entered this mode, it was as if he had entered an energy world. In

his vision was a glowing energy flow, and the space around him was limitlessly zoomed in or zoomed out. Every single one of his senses were enhanced by several hundred or thousand times, whether it was pain, colors, noises, even the elevation. In that one second, he would have experienced the amount of sensory simulation that would be compiled over several days. It was something that was really hard to be described by words.

But...

Yao Yuan tried to ignore his head that was spinning and controlled the Red Lightning as it rushed towards the group of landing ships. If this was a real battle, the Red Lightning should have gone to "bully" those large motherships, but since this fleet wasn't controlled by a sentient lifeform, they wouldn't be cornered by Yao Yuan. They wouldn't call back their ships simply because the motherships were under attack. Humanity had to take down all the landing ships; otherwise, once the City of Light Moon was taken over, even if humanity later destroyed all the spaceships, the fate of extinction would be inevitable.

The war continued to rage on...

Zhang San piloted a Space Combat Jet and followed behind the main fleet carefully. He was looking for an opening, an opening to go deep into the enemy fleet. He was looking for a ship. It couldn't be perfectly preserved spaceship because the ship's energy shield would stop him from getting too close, and it couldn't be a broken spaceship either because that would defeat the purpose.

In fact, Zhang San had actually snuck out. Since he was a Black Star Trooper, he was assigned a Space Combat Jet. The battlefield was covered with creator's particles, so once he left the mothership, there was no way for Guang Zhen to call him back. The main issue now was how he was going to enter an AI spaceship. Pretend to be enslaved? But there was no telling whether the robots would capture him alive. After all, this was a battlefield...

"What to do now, what to do now..."

Zhang San was fretting as he piloted the Space Combat Jet. If his Anima power was as developed as Xi Kong's, he would have contacted Yao Yuan to ask for his opinion. He was caught between a rock and a hard place. Infiltrating the ranks of the enemy spaceships was harder than he predicted. However, he knew he couldn't drag this on. Zhang San could see the battles that were happening above the City of Light Moon. There was a ray of red that was dashing across the place, creating plenty of explosions. This was Yao Yuan fighting the good fight. It looked impressive, but everyone knew that the stronger the Homo Evolutis weapon, the bigger the exhaustion it would have on the pilot. It was the same for the strongest Homo Evolutis, Yao Yuan.

Zhang San had something akin to a blind faith in Yao Yuan. Even though Yao Yuan had openly banned personal idolization, since this faith had nothing to do with politics, it was practically a religion. He would sacrifice his own life to save Yao Yuan's. Furthermore, the place those landing ships were going to land on was his home!

Suddenly, a silver ball flashed before Zhang San. Then a guardian spaceship shattered into pieces. Seeing this, an idea appeared in Zhang San's mind. He immediately turned to ask Intel beside him, "That's... a Steel Ball? Intel, can you contact that Steel Ball?"

Intel naturally had caught a glimpse of that Steel Ball. He asked instantly, "I can, Zhang San... you're prepared to accept my suggestion?"

"Yes, this is our only chance, right? Intel..."

Zhang San smirked as he drove towards the Steel Ball. This ruined the formation of three jets per unit, but since Zhang San's unit consisted of him alone, this wasn't much of an issue. However, plenty of Black Star Troopers saw this, and they wondered why this Space Combat Jet was heading towards a Steel

Ball.

However, the Steel Ball's speed and agility was not something the Space Combat Jet could rival. Therefore, in the next few minutes, the only thing Zhang San could do was trail behind the Steel Ball. He couldn't get close enough to the range of the Steel Ball's creator's particle zone. This caused him to be flustered and tickled. Finally, he had to try to use his Anima power to gain contact with the Steel Ball pilot. Of course, he didn't dare to roar or do any such thing in the soul web, he merely nudged the fireball represented by the Steel Ball. As he expected, after the Steel Ball took down several battleships, it started to approach him.

Very soon, Zhang San entered the Steel Ball's creator's particle zone and Intel instantly established a channel of communication between them.

"Dear Black Star Trooper, I am trooper Zhang San and I need your help. I... I've received a secret mission to transport a computer virus into an undamaged enemy spaceship. However, that is impossible with my Space Combat Jet. I need you to help me lead the way. This is a secret mission and you have to accept it!" When Zhang San said these words, his face was so red. Thankfully, they couldn't see each other, or the blatant lie would've been exposed.

The pilot of the Steel Ball was Amulo. He was so excited he could scream when he heard this. Finally, there's a mission! Of course, there wouldn't be just mob-killing, there had to be a main quest. This was normal, this was how a real war should be (?) so he replied, "It's an escort mission then? No, no, no, you need me to escort you onto an enemy main spaceship? Okay, I understand, leave it to me, hahaha..."

It came as quite a surprise to Zhang San that the opposing Black Star Trooper had bought his lie so easily. Regardless, he didn't have time to waste. He started to follow behind the Steel Ball that opened the way for him. All the spaceships, landing ships, and

shuttles could barely survive for seconds facing the Steel Ball. The efficiency of the Steel Ball made Zhang San's mouth fall open. Plus, the desire of the Steel Ball pilot was bigger than Zhang San's. He planned to bring him onto an enemy mothership. However, since the mothership's shield couldn't be broken down, they had to give up. They then found a nearby main ship. The Steel Ball shattered the ship's energy shield and Zhang San quickly rushed in. With the Steel Ball's help, Zhang San drove the combat jet through a small opening on the main ship's surface. After he got in, Amulo drove away on a high from completing the escort mission.

Zhang San walked out from the Space Combat Jet in his space armor. To his pleasant surprise, there wasn't an army of robots to greet him. It was as if this spaceship had no mechanized infantry. Regardless, he didn't let his guard down. He walked on tip-toes as he led Intel deeper into the spaceship. Then he followed Intel's directions to locate an electrical port. Intel then connected himself to the spaceship's system.

"...Data connecting, hacking, password cracked... Decrypting data, entering program, editing program..."

Just as Intel started working, Zhang San saw a group of robots with varying shapes rushing at them from down the corridor. There were about several thousand of them. He swallowed his saliva and pulled out his laser blade. However, suddenly, the eyes of these robots glowed twice before they stopped where they were like they had run out of battery.

"Have you done it? Wonderful! Intel, control this spaceship!" Zhang San yelled excitedly.

"Data decrypted... Discovery of strong data flow! Calculation error! The AI fleet is using the second mode of AI existence. Data overflow, anti-hacking program activated, failed, shut down program initiating, failed, self-destruct program..."

None of them discovered that...

Between these spaceships, no matter how big or how small, every AI spaceship was connected with thin, nano-level metallic wire to the pyramid-shaped motherships...

They were sharing information even within the creator's particle range!

Chapter 471: Ending?

Despair clogged Yao Yuan's heart. The number of enemy spaceships... was simply too high!

During the ambush circle, even though the New Solar System first fleet faced a larger enemy, humanity had the upper hand in that battle. From the location, Homo Evolutis, and most importantly, the weapon that changed the tide of the battle, humanity had the advantage, and that was crucial to humanity's victory despite the enemy having more numbers.

However, here, humanity was racing to catch up to the enemy who was heading towards the City of Light Moon. The battlefield was not humanity's choice. There wasn't much strategy to be said for this war as this was a war of numbers, and in terms of numbers, humanity was losing greatly...

One human had to fight about one thousand enemy spaceships. The imbalance in terms of numbers was hugely disadvantageous for humanity!

If this was allowed to continue, the fall of humanity was only a matter of time. Yao Yuan was a human being, and he too would get tired and exhausted. In fact, when this thought crossed his mind, he was already feeling so fatigued that he could fall asleep there and then, but he understood he couldn't. He was the City of Light Moon's biggest defender, and he had taken care of more than 90 percent of landing ships on his own. If he was indisposed... he really didn't dare to imagine the consequences...

The enemy still has at least fifty to sixty thousand main spaceships left. Damn! This is an unwinnable war. If this drags on, we'll only welcome extinction. So our only hope is... space warp!

This thought cropped up in Yao Yuan's mind. This was the final, final resort, something that had to be done when there was no other option. After this space warp, humanity would lose this New

Solar System and all the good things that had been built here. They would lose... the Homo Evolutis, vanguard unit that sacrificed themselves here....

Just what kind of ending would this be? Humanity, a space civilization that was heading towards middle-tier, would drop to become a space civilization at the brink of extinction. The life of humanity in the future was unimaginably bad. Without resources, without weapons, without motivation, without a place call home, humanity might end up worse than those deteriorating level 2 space civilizations...

But... what choice did they have? It was either this or definite extinction...

(Yes, Bo Li is already on the Hope. Same with the majority of the great scientists. There is also a handful of Black Star Troopers that didn't join the war. It's good enough...)

Tears escaped Yao Yuan's eyes and pain tore at his heart. This was a final goodbye. Even if these abandoned soldiers miraculously survived the war, the warped citizens would no longer return. Space is too wide for them to meet again. The families, lovers, and friends, they were not going to meet again...

I shouldn't be too emotional. At least we still have the chance to escape. While I can still fight, I should try to hold on to buy time more time to space warp. Yes, we shall try to provide this last opportunity to humanity. Humanity... will continue to survive in space!

Yao Yuan then shot down the batch of landing ships closest to him. As he turned to drive towards the creator's particle zone of the city and order them to space warp, his vision cleared because the numerous landing ships started to disappear. Well, disappear was an exaggeration. The number was no longer that intensive, so the place was several hundred times less crowded than before. Only several hundred spaceships remained, and they didn't head

towards the City of Light Moon, they moved towards the spaceship fleet.

F*ck! They're no longer interested in taking the City of Light Moon? They want to destroy it? Using that purple light ray weapon?!

Yao Yuan broke out in cold sweat. The damage of that purple light ray weapon was too powerful; it was powerful enough to harm a level 4 space civilization. Even though only a mothership could use it, the focus fire of several motherships was more than enough to ruin even the moon itself. This kind of weapon... humanity wouldn't even have the chance to defend itself. Extinction would come in the blink of an eye!

Yao Yuan didn't dare to stay put. He didn't think there was even time for him to tell the City of Light Moon to space warp. In the Red Lightning, he rushed towards the enemy fleet, attempting to take down those motherships in the shortest amount of time. However, before he even got close, a purple ray suddenly brushed past the Red Lightning. When the ray passed him, Yao Yuan felt like his heart had stopped. Fear, terror, none of the adjectives were strong enough to describe his feeling. He didn't even dare to turn to look. The people, families, Bo Li...

Yao Yuan's Red Lightning stopped right there in space. He didn't move forward or backwards. He stayed there for at least four seconds before he "looked" back. There it was... Light Moon and the City of Light Moon. The purple ray had brushed the moon before dispersing into space. Neither the moon nor the city was harmed.

"They're... retreating?"

Yao Yuan turned around to see the AI fleet starting to turn around just like how they did in the ambush circle. All the spaceships crowded around the pyramid-shaped motherships to protect them as they turned around. Some of the main ships

remained immobile. Even though Yao Yuan didn't know where the purple ray cannons were, he could tell they were aiming at the City of Light Moon... Was that a warning shot?

Not only had Yao Yuan come to this conclusion, almost everyone involved in the war could see it because the AI fleet was being quite obvious. They were leaving the City of Light Moon at an incredible speed. Other than the Black Star Troopers who were deep in their ranks, the humans and AI spaceships were clearly delineated on the battlefield. One was idling, the other was slowly moving away.

About 10 minutes after the AI fleet started retreating, all the Black Star Troopers surrounded Yao Yuan. Yao Yuan was at his limit, but he forced his eyes open to look at the AI fleet. He had no idea what was happening. Why would they retreat when they had victory in their grasp? What was the reason? Weren't they here for ZERO or Intel? Didn't they want lifeforms?

Many questions surrounded Yao Yuan's mind. He had to get to the bottom of this; however, he didn't dare to give chase to the AI fleet. None of them did. Even though the AI fleet still had 50,000 civilians whose fates were unknown, they didn't dare to chase after the fleet. The power of the purple ray was too scary. Behind them was the the City of Light Moon, so no one dared to make this bet, including him!

Everyone could only watch as this happened. At the most crucial of times, at the very last moment, at the point of despair, the enemy chose to retreat without much fanfare except a shot of the purple ray to warn humanity from pursuing them. The whole of the human forces watched as the enemy escaped... none of them dared to test the AI fleet. What if they returned to land on the City of Light Moon?

Even as the AI fleet moved away, none of the humans dared to let their guards down until suddenly the space occupied by the AI fleet started to blur. It was as if a giant bubble had appeared in space, and the size was bigger than a planet. Before humanity realized

what it was, the endless amount of AI ships disappeared. Yes, they disappeared along with the blur. After that, the blurry space started to sharpen until everything returned to normal. Everything felt like it was just an illusion.

"No, it's not an illusion! The signs of the war are still there, the broken bits of the spaceships, this is not an illusion... Yes, the fleet has used warp drive. They sure are brave to use warp drive inside a solar system. Aren't they afraid of losing their way? Then again, an AI fleet wouldn't have to care about the issue of life. As long as they have enough energy, they wouldn't mind getting lost. They could find a random solar system and a hundred thousand spaceships can be reproduced just like that...

"But why would they retreat? What was their purpose? Was it not ZERO or Intel? The way they knew about ZERO or Intel aside, they wouldn't have left before getting the two sentient intelligences... No, wait! Intel! F*ck! Intel was part of the vanguard unit, and they had captured the shuttle with 50,000 civilians. Could Intel be on that shuttle as well..."

Perhaps it was the last light before dawn, but as Yao Yuan watched the AI fleet disappear in a blur, he didn't feel exhausted anymore. In fact, his brain started to work in overdrive. In just a second, he had come up with a conclusion, but before he could decide what to do with that conclusion, darkness fell...

Chapter 472: Victory?

When Yao Yuan woke up, the AI fleet had been gone for four days. In fact, with the condition Yao Yuan was in, it wouldn't be out of place if he had gone into coma like Jay. He shouldn't have woken up on the fourth day. This was too weird. However, Yao Yuan didn't have the focus to deal with this, his attention was fully occupied by the aftermath of the war.

When Yao Yuan exited the City of Light Moon's hospital, he realized the civilians had all returned to the City of Light Moon. In the few days he was unconscious, with the help of both the Defense Unit and the Black Star Troopers, the AI robots remaining in the City of Light Moon had been cleared. In the end, the City of Light Moon wasn't heavily destroyed. This was because the AI fleet didn't use any large scale weaponry. The robots that landed on the City of Light Moon focused solely on capturing humans, so other than parts of certain buildings, most of the systems were perfectly preserved. This was why the civilians could move back to the City of Light Moon so soon.

On the way from the hospital to the government building, what Yao Yuan saw was not a broken city but a broken civilization. This war had caused thousands injuries, deaths, and disappearances, including almost 100 Black Star Troopers, a great scientist, and several ten thousands newborns...

This loss was something that couldn't be described in words. This was a loss that couldn't be regained that easily.

This was what Yao Yuan saw. Even the patrolling Defense Unit soldiers had faces filled with confusion. The arrogance, excitement, and human spirit were shattered completely by this war. Now Yao Yuan felt like he was in the city of the walking dead. This was what Yao Yuan worried about the most. If the human spirit was lost, then the collapse of human civilization was inevitable...

When Yao Yuan noticed this, he immediately told the worker who was piloting the hovercraft, "Tell the government PR department that I will conduct a speech in another hour."

The PR department was highly efficient. Yao Yuan's craft had just arrived at the government building when Barbie and some officials were already waiting at the entrance. Among them was Guang Zhen and crew. The vanguard unit was heavily damaged and they were recuperating on the City of Light Moon.

Yao Yuan discussed government details with Barbie and the government officials for an hour before he chased everyone away. Only Guang Zhen remained, and they both walked towards the Chancellor's room. There were no words after they sat down, the atmosphere was tense.

"Ol' Wong... If this is the victory we get, then I'd rather we space warp at the onset, give up on this city, and restart at a new location," Yao Yuan said after he stood up and wandered to the window.

Guang Zhen's words were filled with bitterness as well. He shook his head and said, "This is not your fault, it is not anyone's fault. We miscalculated the prowess of the AI fleet. When we discovered their real identity, it was already too late. This was not something either one of us could have predicted. If we really start with a space warp, we might end up with a greater loss than now..."

Yao Yuan sat and pulled out a cigarette to light before saying, "I understand, but the hearts simply wouldn't calm down. Plus, this war has caused us a grievous wound; it has even shattered the human spirit. This means that the possibility of renaissance in the future... is greatly lowered, at least it is no longer possible in our generation. It might be possible for the next generation who has not experienced this war. After all, in the end... we didn't win this war with our own power, the enemy chose to retreat when they had victory in their grasp. This feeling... we're like a bug being spared because we aren't worth the trouble!" Yao Yuan was raging

when he said this, but there was nothing he could do but sit there and grip his hands tightly until the veins were popping.

When Guang Zhen heard this, he suddenly added, "By the way, since you've just woken up, you haven't been briefed on this yet. Nian Xi Kong woke up yesterday, and this morning, she told me something that you need to know... The AI fleet has captured many of our people, right? They include one great scientist, 50,000 civilians, and about eight Black Star Troopers whose combat jets exploded. They are all still alive but are currently being held captive. The AI fleet even provided them with food and medical treatment."

Yao Yuan was pleasantly surprised. He asked immediately, "How does she know about this? The AI fleet should be in the middle of warp drive, right? Even if we can detect them, we shouldn't be unable to detect their interior."

Guang Zhen answered, "It's Zhang San. Alongside Intel, they are part of the captives. Zhang San used the soulweb to reach Xi Kong, and it was he who revealed this information to her. The great scientist is being kept in the same room with him, and they are still alive..."

Yao Yuan stood up to pace the room, but he soon slumped back in his chair with despondency. "I can't see a way... The AI fleet's warp drive speed is 10 times faster than ours, and even if we miraculously catch up to them, we don't have any military prowess to take them down. Those captive humans, we have to..." Yao Yuan's lips were filled with bitterness. He was humanity's Chancellor. It was his responsibility to protect his citizens, but as the Chancellor, he had to make difficult decisions to preserve the longevity of the human race. He was caught between a rock and a hard place, and it was not a good feeling.

"What if we have 100 more Steel Balls?" Guang Zhen suggested after some thought.

Yao Yuan laughed humorlessly. "If we have at least 70, no, 50 more Steel Balls, and they are all piloted by Homo Evolutis like myself who can survive for more than three hours, then the AI fleet is a non-issue, but is that possible? All the other Homo Evolutis will collapse after they operate the Steel Balls, and it is a one-time exhaustion. Even if they survive, they'll become vegetables. Who is going to be responsible for that, you or me?"

Guang Zhen suddenly pointed at the document sitting on top of Yao Yuan's table. Yao Yuan picked it up and started to read. It was then that Guang Zhen said, "I also found out about this three days ago. The report was done yesterday and you woke up today... The hidden Whisperer who designed the control system has shown herself. Furthermore, she completed the design for a super-weapon called the psychokinetic floating cannon with Bo Li several days ago. She woke up almost at the same time as Xi Kong. I've asked her about the mental control system. She said that if she has Bo Li's lab and equipment, cooperation from a large crew, and Bo Li's help with some designs, then she is confident she can perfect the control system's design in three months and lower the pressure to the level where even normal Homo Evolutis can use it without repercussions..."

Yao Yuan looked at Guang Zhen seriously before returning to the report. After about 20 minutes, he asked Guang Zhen seriously, "You mean... it's time to use point space warp? It's true that 10 years have passed and we can rely on the illusory space to pinpoint our space warp exit for once. With the help from Zhang San feeding us information, we can indeed surprise the AI fleet when they leave the warp drive space. Isn't this the blazing trail project we set up earlier?"

The blazing trail project was part of the new habitation white manifesto. It was a project that stated that when humanity was threatened by an alien civilization and had suffered great losses, humanity would use point space warp to warp to the civilization's

home planet or Shelter after humanity had confidence in winning. A devastating blow would be delivered and the human weapons would cause a sea of fire to swallow the whole enemy forces, thus the term "blazing trail project."

The reason for this project was to prevent what worried Yao Yuan currently. This was because a civilization's spirit was maintained in victories and collapsed in losses. There were no races that were more familiar with the consequence of a shaken spirit than humanity, because humanity was a civilization that had escaped from a life-preserving planet before it was a full-fledged level 2 space civilization. Humanity was privy to the effects of a high spirit and the negative effects a low spirit could bring. This was the purpose of the blazing trail project, it was a project based in revenge!

Guang Zhen nodded but didn't say anything because Yao Yuan was the human Chancellor. He respected and followed his orders.

Yao Yuan picked up the report on the mental control system, and after some time, he asked Guang Zhen, "What about Bo Li? When will she wake up?"

Guang Zhen answered, "In less than three days, that is confirmed by the stability of her brain graph."

"More than 100 Steel Balls, and the psychokinetic floating cannon that can fire at multiple targets at the same time?" Yao Yuan stood up and started to pace.

"Also 50,000 civilians, almost 10 Black Star Troopers, and a great scientist!" Guang Zhen added fuel to the fire and emphasized on the things on the line.

"Let's do it!" Yao Yuan hissed through gritted teeth with both his eyes blazing. "I'll bring up this decision in the upcoming speech..."

"The blazing trail project!"

Chapter 473: Blazing Trail!

"This is Yao Yuan, we have won this war, but we've sacrificed so much...

"We have lost so much, so much, friends, families, parents, children. If possible, none of us want to experience this. Peace... such a wonderful term...

"But! Peace is built on the deaths of heroes! Every single one of our homes has the blood of human heroes! Victory is ours, despite the harsh process and ending, victory is definitely ours. Because one, we didn't flee, we didn't flee like cowards and abandoned our home. Two, we have fought bravely for this land that we call home, and we have won! We have definitely won this local war!

"Using the New Solar System first fleet, the Black Star Troopers, and the two Defense lines, we have managed to minimize an AI spaceship fleet with over 2,000,000 spaceships to only several ten thousand, and we made them turn on their tail and run! Therefore, we have definitely won this local war!

"I believe everyone has heard that crucial term, local war...

"...Yes, the local war is already over, but our friends who were taken captives, they're still out there, so the bigger war is still not over yet!

"We humans might still be weak, but we will never abandon our comrades and people! Ever since we left Earth, we have been on the lookout for each other, and this time, it will be the same! We will follow the human constitution and the contents of the white manifesto. I will use my power as the Chancellor to mobilize the military and continue this war...

"I announce! The initiation of the blazing trail project! We will pursue the silver AI civilization until the end of the universe if need be!

"We humans... will continue fighting! For our home, our people, our survival, and our future!"

It had been three months since Yao Yuan's important speech. The speech came at an opportune time because it had changed the whole society's outlook. Humans had indeed lost so much in this war, they had lost more than 100 Black Star Troopers, 1 great scientist, and about 100,000 civilians. Who could stomach these losses?

This war had practically broken humanity's spine. Everyone's spirits were so crushed that it had practically eclipsed everyone mind's that humanity had put up a wondrous fight. Yao Yuan's speech stirred them back to that. Humanity did deserve a pat on the back for what they did during this war. Furthermore, Yao Yuan didn't bring up the thing with Intel, so it was natural for the civilians to agree with Yao Yuan. They thought the AI fleet was forced to flee because they were pressured by the human forces, when in reality it was the other way round!

This was a much-needed PR move. This meant that humanity was not seen as a bug that wasn't worth stepping on, but humanity was strong enough to protect their home and themselves. They had achieved this victory with their own process, and the victory was snatched from one of the three great tragedies of the cosmos. According to Blue 6, even for a Shelter with more than 10 level 3 space civilizations, they would've still been wiped out when faced with such a large AI fleet. However, humanity had achieved victory, and this was incredibly meaningful. This showed that humanity was no longer a bug, they were strong enough to ensure their own safety already!

This shift in thought reinstalled humanity with faith and confidence. Even though there was still sadness, even though one-fourth of the families on the City of Light Moon had suffered losses, the eulogies given at these funerals had a tectonic shift. If it was mostly about misery and sadness earlier, now they inspired

glory and sacrifice, especially the families of the Defense Unit soldiers and Black Star Troopers. Most of them were veritable human heroes, and some of them could be memorialized forever in the Hall of Remembrance!

The announcement for the initiation of the blazing trail project also lit up the City of Light Moon. Of course, there were parties who thought Yao Yuan was being too rash with the decision. Most of these people were from the elder generation, and they wished for stability, but the vast majority cheered for this decision. Why? Simple, because it was confirmed that the several ten thousand captives in the AI fleet were still alive and there were about 10 Black Star Troopers, 10! This meant that the percentage of fatalities for the Black Star Trooper would decrease from $\frac{1}{7}$ to $\frac{1}{8}$. This meant that some families of these Black Star Troopers would have their sons back. This gave them hope.

The civilians aside, there was also an important great scientist. How many great scientists did humanity have? They were humanity's biggest treasures. Losing one would greatly decrease the time humanity needed to become a level 3 space civilization. It was a loss that couldn't be measured. Therefore, after this great scientist was confirmed to be alive, there was no way Yao Yuan couldn't chase after the AI fleet.

Before Yao Yuan woke up, Guang Zhen had decided to hold a national mourning ceremony. After Yao Yuan woke up, he also approved of the notion. Seven days were specially held off to hold this ceremony. The seven days were also recorded in human history, and the ritual would be repeated every year to remember the heroes who had sacrificed themselves in this war.

After that, time flew. In just the blink of an eye, three months had passed. In these past three months, humanity had showcased incredible passion and mobility, one that hadn't been seen pre-war. This had shocked Blue 6 so much that at one point, he suspected the people had been taken over by robots. Just how

could a space civilization progress so fast?

When these words were spread to the public, almost every human answered with pride. That is because we are not normal space civilization, we are humans!

Yes, we are humans...

The crazy advancement in the three months had proven the validity of that statement. In the three months, humanity had repaired and improved the gravity cannon ship fleet and the New Solar System first fleet.

Of course, this was merely the tip of the iceberg. The expansion for the Defense Unit was approved and the age of consent had been lowered from 18 to 16. This was wonderful news for the Defense Unit, one that was supported by the new proposal from Speaker Matt, the mandatory enlistment. All adult males and females, as long as they were not part of the Academy, would have to serve in the Defense Unit for at least five years. The House of Representatives was working on including this proposal in the constitution. Speaker Matt was personally affected by this war and he too was trying his best to help Yao Yuan and Guang Zhen solve some issues.

Then a new second defense line was reconstructed on the ruin of the original second defense line. This time, the budget could be said to be bottomless. Ignoring the smaller buildings, there were seven Energy Storm cannons. Of course, three months weren't enough to complete the construction, they were expected to be built before the year ended. This way, the combat capability of the new second defense line was almost 4 times the capability of the old second defense line. The place was no longer just a defense line, it had become the second human colonized space entity.

The Black Star Troopers and Defense Unit were responsible for salvaging the ruins of the war. The span of the battlefield was so large that according to statistics, the combined amount of

salvageable resources, metals, and parts would be enough to support humanity for at least 100 years! In fact, the major ruins, like the ones created by the gravity cannons, provided more than enough materials to build Kun Lun. In fact, the amount was so great that it was enough to build three Kun Luns!

The salvage was still going on. Since the AI fleet belonged to a peak level 3 space civilization, the information chips found in the ruins contained enough information to help humanity achieve a higher civilization level. They would greatly improve humanity's knowledge. Of course, it was unrealistic to hope that this information could usher humanity towards the peak of level 3 space civilization instantly, but the Academy believed that after humanity mastered this information, humanity at least could reach the intermediate stage of level 3 space civilization. Among the salvaged information, the AI fleet's propeller system and warp drive system were the most interesting. A task force made up from Bo Li and six other great scientists would dissect them and incorporate them into humanity's energy umbrella propeller system. The newest maximum speed was 3.7 times the original speed, and this number was only going to increase. On the other hand, they could now achieve 240 times the previous warp drive speed. This was a scary concept, it was twice as fast as before!

Then... two months after Yao Yuan's important speech, the first batch of mass-produced Steel Balls and the related psychological amplification devices were created. Other than that, there were also more psychokinetic floating cannons and related weaponry. Now, three months after the important speech, humanity had more than 300 Steel Balls and 300 attached psychokinetic floating cannons...

The reason there was so many Steel Balls was because in these three months after the war, there were more than several hundred normal civilians who awakened into Homo Evolutis. The number of new Homo Evolutis was more than those who died in the war.

Unfortunately, there were only a handful of S-grade Homo Evolutis, the rest were normal Homo Evolutis...

Finally...

Xi Kong was led to the Chancellor's room under the protection of several patrolling soldiers. The moment she entered the room, she said, "Zhang San has contacted me. They have just left warp drive and returned to normal space..."

Yao Yuan slowly raised his head, his eyes burning with vengeance.

"Is that so? Then... it's time to initiate the blazing trail project!

"Revenge will be ours!"

Chapter 474: The Great Academy!

Of course, the blazing trail project couldn't just be initiated with a single command. After all, this was a space journey that spanned more than several hundred light years. Even though the human government had been preparing for this journey over the past three months, when they wanted to really initiate the project, they realized that there were many things that needed to be done, be it politics or military.

"According to the data and the star charts communicated by Zhang San, the AI fleet most possibly is at an empty space about 17 light years away from the New Solar System. It is close to three other solar systems, the closest one being less than five light years away. Therefore, it is predictable that the AI fleet will proceed to that solar system to recuperate...

"Using the controlled space warp, not involving the possible delays, the blazing trail special forces will return to the City of Light Moon in about five months. These five months will be the city's most fragile moments. Therefore, we have to ensure enough defensive power remains with the city."

In the blazing trail war meeting, Yao Yuan addressed everyone present, "For this battle, I will lead 120 Black Star Troopers or 12 Black Star Units. To ensure a victory, these 12 units will be all comprised of experienced soldiers. Therefore, I need your help, Ol' Wong. Gather all the newly awakened Homo Evolutis and have them complete their training as soon as possible, or else it'll just be a waste of the equipment. They need the complete training to master the equipment. At the same time, I will leave you with 20 experienced Black Star Troopers. And they will form the foundation of the new Black Star Troopers. You should be familiar with the rest, so I won't waste my time explaining.

"At the same time, I will bring along 16 main spaceships and 77 guardian spaceships, but this time I won't be taking any

battleships. This is because battleships are more commonly used for landing battles. Even the transport shuttles are better than battleships in ferrying and keeping civilians safe. Of course, this is up for discussion, but for now, the battleships line-up of the fleet might be taken out...

"Along the trip will be 6,000 senior Defense Unit soldiers. This will weaken the City of Light Moon, so Ol' Wong, the expansion and training of the Defense Unit will be very important..."

Guang Zhen sat in the chair and nodded. "I understand, but the blazing trail project is more important than that. If anything, I'll be more worried if you don't take the experienced soldiers with you. Don't worry about the City of Light Moon. With another half a month of training, all the newly awakened Homo Evolutis will be able to pilot the Steel Balls. Then, they will be able to perform missions while piloting the Steel Balls. Honestly, after they finish this training, they might be even stronger than your blazing trail unit."

Yao Yuan smiled but didn't say anything. Even though there was a new wave of Homo Evolutis awakening, based on the statistics, there were only 130 plus Homo Evolutis in total, and more than 10 were children or females who selected the journey of motherhood. The rest was all enrolled in the Black Star Unit. If just based on quantity alone, this newly built group with 120 Homo Evolutis was indeed greater in number compared to the earlier Black Star Unit, but the quality was up for question. They would need at least half a year of training before they could reach the standard of an actual Black Star soldier.

Yao Yuan even started to suspect his Immortal power. According to Blue 6, he would be able to recycle the soul of dead Homo Evolutis, but the situation was, there were more new Homo Evolutis than those who passed away. This had violated the law of soul conservation, and Yao Yuan could only believe that this was a side effect of his Immortal power...

However, this was unable to be confirmed because human technology was still too backwards. Furthermore, the current focus was the blazing trail project. After forming the foundation of the blazing trail fleet, Yao Yuan started to manage those who remained.

"First, Guang Zhen will take my place as the new Chancellor. Other than the ultimate voting rights, he will enjoy all the power accorded to the Chancellor. At the same time, I have decided to set up a new sect of power. Other than the government, House of Representatives, the courts, and the foreign affair committee, I have decided to construct the Great Academy. From now on, the Great Academy will have the right to hire and fire new students or staff. At the same time, to facilitate new weapon testing and confidential clauses, the Great Academy will be given its own defensive system. To put it simply, the Great Academy will have its own army. Of course, the power of its army will be limited. Basically, it has the same power structure as the foreign affair soldiers."

When Yao Yuan announced this, the room was shocked. Even Guang Zhen was surprised. Obviously, this was a decision that was made without discussing with him first. However, when he thought about it, this decision didn't come from nowhere. It was probably inspired by the incident involving Yang Yun Si and Xiu Yue Xuan...

After the war, Yue Xuan's identity was completely exposed. The mass production of the Steel Balls had tipped the public off to her identity. This caused a new wave of discussion among the public. If Yue Xuan hadn't kept her identity hidden, humanity would have produced plenty of Steel Balls already. If this was peace time, then nothing would have happened, but they had just survived the most disastrous war in human history. Perhaps the number of fatalities couldn't rival the number of deaths in, let's say, World War I or II, but in terms of percentage, the death toll was spine-chilling.

Furthermore, the scale of the war was something humanity had not seen before. This was humanity's first actual space war!

While it was true that the Steel Balls wouldn't have existed without Yue Xuan, the losses suffered in this war had shattered the public's sanity. Many people turned their anger and grief towards Yun Si and Yue Xue, and Yun Si bore the brunt of the hatred. Some of the people even suggested hanging him for being a human traitor, the biggest offense possible among the human race.

The courts were an entity beyond the control of the House of Representatives and the government. Even though public opinion could sway the courts' decision, generally speaking, it was its own isolated party. After discussion and evidence-collecting, the two were ruled to be innocent and released. This ruling had caused another wave of discussion among the public. According to the word of the law, these two were indeed innocent, but according to some parts of the public, they were definitely not innocent. Sin by omission was still a sin. They overruled Yun Si's defense of self-preservation. According to these people, they were a collective, a space civilization, so there shouldn't be a need for self-preservation.

Another part of the public agreed with the courts. The war was too sudden, and they couldn't blame the result on the two innocent individuals. Furthermore, they hadn't actively harmed the civilization. If anything, Yun Si had fought greatly for humankind. Yue Xuan had contributed plenty after the war in the mass production of the Steel Ball, the mental power expansion device, and the psychokinetic floating cannons. They had done more than enough to make up for their mistake. They should be deemed innocent, at least according to the law.

After the ruling was passed, both Yun Si and Yue Xuan reacted to the result differently. Yun Si handed in his resignation letter and spent his days moping around, while Yue Xuan shared her many equipment ideas, weapon designs, and scientific theories openly.

Her insight into the power of the mind excited many scientists because it not only filled a great void within the sciences, it was enough to create a new branch, just like electricity and electromagnetism.

As the public opinion against the pair turned to the worst, many great scientists stepped forward to show their support to Yue Xuan. This caused some of the public to turn against the Academy itself. They started to doubt the impartialness of the scientists and tried to undermine the validity of the sciences.

This had been allowed to go on for one and a half months already, and it wasn't slowing down. After all, the resentment from more than 100,000 deaths and disappearances couldn't be placated so easily. Many people had lost their sanity over this. At this juncture, Yao Yuan came up with this Great Academy bill. He was making a statement, not indirectly but openly and directly. The institute of science could not be violated no matter what!

No matter the era, science was the most important thing. Throughout human history, be it the prehistoric era, historic era, medieval, or modern, science had always been sacrificed for the sake of politics. Politics and religions had always made use of science as their tool, loved when beneficial, disposed of when they felt like it. This time, the people wanted to control science again because of human emotions? Understandable but unforgivable!

Ever since humanity entered space, they had survived so many wars all thanks to the Academy. The only yardstick of a civilization's power in space was not politics, economy, or culture, the key thing was science. Yao Yuan knew how instrumental science was to survival in space, or else Guang Zhen wouldn't have purposely mentioned that one great scientist when he was trying to push for the blazing trail project.

"From today onwards, the Great Academy bill will be in effect. This is the last bill I set before the blazing trail project, and if the House of Representatives refuses to pass it, then I will use my

ultimate vote to pass it!

"Science, only by scientific advancement we'll be able to stand in space, and so the institute of science has to be off limits. If anyone dares to push their hands into the Great Academy, attempting to influence the progress of science or to use it for personal gain, no matter who that person is...

"...I will chop their hands off! This is the last warning!"

Chapter 475: Guest

Yun Si sat in his apartment, his expression calm like he was not thinking of anything, or rather outsiders couldn't tell what was on his mind.

The three-month-long torment was finally over, and he was devastated. He planned to quit the Black Star Troopers, but he started to regret this after he handed in his letter of resignation. It was not because he missed the power. Yes, the Black Star Troopers carried plenty of influence, but he didn't care about that. It was because resignation was an action of cowardice. After all, he had survived this silver war. He had seen so many comrades die beside him. He was not one without emotion, so how could he not get angry? How could he not want to take revenge for his fallen comrades?

Concealing Yue Xuan's identity was due to his fear and prejudices. Even though it was selfish, he was not acting in the vein of a human traitor like some of the people branded him to be. After all, the silver war came too suddenly, no one had expected it. It was unfair to blame him. His only mistake was doing the wrong thing at the wrong time. He wanted to make up for his mistake, he wanted to get his revenge for his fallen comrades...

At that time, the bell of the apartment rang. Yun Si's heart skipped a beat. The news he had been waiting for had finally arrived...

"120 Black Star Troopers will depart immediately on the blazing trail. Following are the names of the 120 selected Black Star Troopers..."

Currently, humanity had in total about 250 Black Star Troopers, and 130 of them were senior soldiers that survived the silver war. During the war, the Black Star Troopers suffered 82 deaths, about 1/3 its size. Technically, the Black Star Troopers had been changed.

Several Black Star Units had to be changed completely. This was how devastating the war was.

The blazing trail project had already been announced, and Yao Yuan would be personally leading it. At the same time, he would be leading 12 Black Star Units or 120 trained Black Star Troopers. Many people suspected most of the 120 Black Star Troopers would be made up of senior soldiers, but perhaps they might bring along a few hopeful new troopers to have them experience the war.

However, Yun Si had a different idea. According to how he understood Yao Yuan, he would never bring along any new troopers. Yao Yuan was decisive and clever, but he was, at the end of the day, a big softie. This was observable from many of his big and small decisions. Therefore, Yao Yuan would never bring along those new troopers, at least not until they could fend for themselves in war.

Therefore, all of the 120 Black Star Troopers had to be chosen from the senior soldiers. 120 chosen from 130 available soldiers. There should be a huge possibility that Yun Si would be chosen.

However... one month ago, when his issue had reached its peak, he had already handed in his resignation. Even though it was rejected several days later, it had left a sour taste in Yao Yuan's mouth. Yao Yuan was not one to use politics to take revenge, so he would purposely enroll him into the blazing trail unit to shove him to his death. If anything, Yao Yuan might purposely leave him in the City of Light Moon to give him time to cool down.

This was the thing Yun Si was most afraid of. He looked calm on the surface, but the moment he closed his eyes, all he could see were the faces of his comrades, the laughter they shared, the sweat during the long training, their verbal jabs. In fact, he was in greater pain than he let on. If only he hadn't concealed Yue Xuan's identity, if only...

Therefore, his name had to be on the list. Please let me join the

blazing trail project, let me redeem myself... to avenge my friends!

"...The third Black Star Unit leader, Ebon, vice leader... Yang Yun Si, members... please prepare yourself in the next three days and report to the third main ship on the fifth day..."

"...The fourth Black Star Unit leader, Liu Bai..."

The order was like a song from the heavens. Yun Si's heart finally relaxed. He lowered his head and his eyes were prickling with tears. His knuckles were white and popping with veins. His comrades' smiling faces seemed to appear before his eyes once more...

(Brothers, wait and see, I will definitely avenge you!)

"All of the weapons are ready. All the main spaceships and guardian spaceships have been checked thrice. 240 Steel balls are on board already. Each Black Star Troopers will have one main vehicle and a spare one. Other than that, the main spaceships have enough supplies to last the soldiers 100 years in space..."

Guang Zhen accompanied Yao Yuan as they walked towards the City of Light Moon's space port. Both were inspecting the war preparations. Originally, it would be Barbie who explained all of these things to Yao Yuan, but Guang Zhen had taken over the job.

After finishing the report, Guang Zhen turned to Yao Yuan and said seriously, "Ol Yao... Ol' Captain, you already know what I'm going to say next, and I believe you understand that I'm representing many people when I say, why are you personally leading this blazing trail project? You should let me command it in your place. We cannot lose you here. The war has just ended, and many things need your overseeing eyes..."

Yao Yuan shook his head and said, "This I understand. My presence can calm the people. Even though I don't want to admit it, I have become something like a spiritual guide to humanity. When I'm around, the human civilization will be peaceful. There

will not be internal strife, that much I'm confident. However, Ol' Wong, have you considered this... what if one day I'm gone?

"In this silver war, I was confident that I was not going to survive it. I felt this deeply once during the ambush circle and again during the landing on the City of Light Moon. I was ready to die, but I was worried about what would happen to humanity after I did... This world will not stop for anyone, but humanity has gotten used to my governance and has gotten used to me deciding crucial stuff using my authority. Even though there is a House of Representatives and a government, this doesn't really translate to democracy. Too many cooks spoil the broth. Do you think the current humanity can survive an internal strife? We should be focused on trying to become a level 4 space civilization. Imagine the devastation if there is internal strife.

"Therefore, this blazing trail project is an opportunity. You're my natural successor. We have to let humanity get used to other political ideals other than mine. That way, even after I'm gone, humanity can continue to move forward. This is number one. Number two, the blazing trail project needs our most powerful forces, and that is undeniably my Red Lightning. I have to be there. The AI fleet still has about 100,000 spaceships, and a majority of them are main spaceships. Therefore, even with the many Steel Balls, the difficulty of this war is very high, so I have to be present."

Yao Yuan turned back to look at Guang Zhen. He continued, "Humanity is humanity, I am me. This is my ideal and the reason why I have to lead the blazing trail project..."

Guang Zhen sighed but didn't say anything. He followed Yao Yuan as they walked further away.

At the same time, in an isolated corner of the City of Light Moon, in an alley between two buildings, there was a sudden spark. Since the City of Light Moon started to simulate the day and night cycle, it was already late at night. There were few people on the streets.

The spark was not bright; if anything, it was faded with a greenish purplish glow. It concentrated into a ball. The ball expanded but the glow weakened. This continued until the ball expanded to about two meters. The next second, a man appeared in the alley in a half-kneeling position. He maintained that posture for about eight seconds before he slowly straightened himself. His bones cracked and the man grimaced with pain. He stretched his limbs before turning to look around.

"So this is the City of Light Moon? The first city built by the ancestors after they had just survived the silver war. They hadn't even built Kun Lun yet. Unfortunately, those archeologists couldn't come along, or else they would lose their minds over this discovery..."

The man, when he was standing straight, was about 180 centimeters tall. He was covered in muscles and had zero hair. There was no hair on the top of his head, none on his brows either. In fact, since he was naked, there was no hair follicle observable on his body.

The man took a deep breath and took a small step. However, the next second, he started to grimace again. This continued for at least half an hour in the alley before he reached the entrance. He looked around and mumbled to himself, "The eighth residential street, the teleportation device didn't move too far away this time. Two more streets and I will reach the designated area where I can get some clothes, then..."

The man stopped talking. He took several deep breaths before he rushed out of the alley. His speed was incredible. It was indescribable by words. His speed was so fast that it was unbelievable. He crossed 100 metres in less than two seconds. His figure seemed to have morphed into a shadow as he dashed through the streets. Furthermore, he seemed to be very familiar with the surveillance cameras in the City of Light Moon because he dashed past those cameras easily and no one had spotted him.

It wasn't until he reached the fourth residential street that he stopped with a frown. There was a surveillance area not far away from him, and he couldn't get any closer. The fourth residential area housed some scientists. They might contain confidential information, so the security at this area was tighter compared to the rest. His destination was one of the buildings that had been abandoned for more than a month already.

"Looks like I have to use the psychic power. Hopefully, everything goes well..."

The man mumbled to himself before he opened his eyes wide. The next second, he walked out of his hiding place and dashed into the building with the cameras watching. However... if one would check the video, the camera had caught nothing even though the man was walking under it!

The man walked towards one of the rooms inside the building. He looked around and pressed something on the room's electronic lock. He then leaned his eyes towards the identity scanner and for some reason, he was allowed entry. The corneal and fingerprint data were matches.

"No, I have to be faster. The memory is coming loose. If I don't hurry, all the memory will disappear..."

The man was in extreme fatigue, but he gritted his teeth to rush towards the computer in the room. He pulled the internet cable loose and then opened the computer. He started to write in the computer in a hurry.

"My name is Wang Shao Yun. I'm your great great great great great great great grandson. You might not believe me, but please don't reveal my identity to anyone else other than the Chancellor. Now, please listen to me..."

"I was under the order of the Black Star coalition of the human nomadic civilization from the future to return to this point in time using the illusory space of the god tier space civilization. I came

from the future to help humanity change its future...

"Time will branch off into different scenarios at a particular frame in time, and we call this Time Node. None of the civilization beneath god tier space civilizations have the ability to return to the past. They might have the ability to see into the past, but they cannot change it. We humans have sacrificed a lot to get this opportunity from the god tier space civilization's illusory space to return to the past one time. This sacrifice was our greatest leader, humanity's only Immortal, Chancellor Yao Yuan's soul. Even though he has passed on, his soul lives on, and when we become a god tier space civilization, we will be able to revive him. However, to gain this opportunity, we have sacrificed his soul, so please believe me when I say, this is the future of humanity...

"After I wake up, I will have lost all the memories that don't belong in this time line. Unless I reach another Time Node, I will not recover these memories. These have to be recorded before I fall asleep, so please listen carefully...

"Stop the formation of the Great Academy, or at least stop them from building their own army!

"The scientists have to be attached to politics or the human civilization itself. We cannot allow the scientists themselves to have individual power. They have the ability to search for knowledge and the ability to transform that knowledge into power. In the future, when humans become a high tier space civilization, this power will in turn collapse the civilization itself!

"Think about it, what if Einstein didn't hand atomic power over to the government after he discovered it? Imagine the devastation he could've produced. With a wave of his finger, a city would have disappeared. He was no longer a man, or at least he wouldn't see himself as one. He was God... a God above everything else!

"The future that I came from is a manifestation of this future. In this Time Node, the Chancellor has formed the Great Academy for

humanity's future, and indeed, in the future, the Academy will contribute immensely to human progress. In fact, the contribution of the Great Academy cannot be understated for humanity to become a high tier space civilization... but, after that, after the first batch of great scientists and their successors all perished away, the new batch of great scientists, since they had both knowledge and the uncontested system to transform their knowledge into power, they started to look down on everyone else. They considered themselves the pure human beings. They continued to expand beyond the power of the normal human civilization. From what we have known, a few of the great scientists had advanced into level 9 space civilization, when the general civilization had just become a level 7 space civilization...

"They started to degenerate. They started to treat other humans as their vassal or slaves. They became cruel, condescending, aloof and finally they betrayed... The Chancellor lost his life because he was betrayed by the great scientists during a war with the Zerg race. The war was called the War of Science, and the great scientists appeared victorious. With that, they announced themselves as gods...

"I'm the descendants of the survivors, which include my parents. We cannot stand the cruelty of the great scientists anymore, so we banded together as the human survivors and escaped. We served the soul brand of the Chancellor, hopeful that one day he might rise again to fight the scientists. However, it was too late as their power was too strong. They sought us out throughout the galaxy, trying to kill us to snatch the Chancellor's soul brand away from us. We are unable to escape them anymore. Before I arrived, the illusory space we owned had accepted the Chancellor's soul. It then bounced the rest of the survivors out of its protection. Therefore, when I accepted this mission to change the past, the rest of the survivors...

"My ancestors, please believe everything that I have stated here.

To prove the validity of my statement, I will provide a formula. This is a formula for a metal called psychic sensory metal. It can be created when humanity becomes a level 4 space civilization, and this is a technology from level 5 space civilization. The formula is...

"Before you expose me or suspect me, please check the validity of this formula. In humanity's most glorious era, we had four Whisperers, and the most powerful among them, ancestor Bo Li, will be able to check the truth of this formula...

"Please do not leak my presence and the contents of this computer to anyone else, we can only believe the Chancellor...

"After I faint and lose my memory, I will forget that I'm your descendent, my ancestor...

"I can no longer return, return to my timeline, my home. As the last Homo Evolutis of the human survivors... I already have no one else...

"So please save us humans! Do not let the fourth tragedy appear in space, the tragedy known as knowledge civilization..."

The man typed until this point and his face was white as paper. He smiled bitterly, and the next second, he fainted...

Chapter 476: Miss

"God tier space civilization, Mo's illusory space, here we present the soul brand of our leader. According to calculations, the soul brand of an Immortal is more than enough to suppress a high level Demon...

"Our race's demand is... to turn back time, to return to the Time Node that will change history. The candidate selected to prevent the formation of the Great Academy is him...

"Wang Shao Yun!"

The man woke up from his dream, but he had forgotten everything about his dream, or rather a magical energy prevented him from remembering his dream. The feeling was curious. He had experienced it and he had the memory, but he couldn't access them. The feeling was oppressive.

The man's brain was about to explode from trying to pinpoint his missing memory. An inexplicable reason made him stop and start to observe his surroundings. He seemed to be in a hospital room. The walls were all white and there were multiple devices in the room, but everything looked outdated... Hmm? Outdated? Why would he feel everything was outdated?

Suddenly, the man realized he was strapped to the bed. He was angered by this mistreatment, but on the surface, he was calm because he noticed there were at least 27 weapons hidden in the room, and eight of them could demolish his physical body in an instant. Two of them were so fast that he wouldn't even have time to use his psychic power... But wait, how did he know about the hidden weapons in the room? What was psychic power? The man returned to his contemplation.

Several minutes later, his face suddenly changed and he glanced at the room's entrance. The door opened on its own and in walked two Black Star Troopers wearing space armors. The man's eyes

widened even though he had no idea why he was being so excited. However, when he saw these two Black Star Troopers, a warm feeling surged through his heart and tears fell from the corners of his eyes even though he couldn't tell for sure why he was crying...

(Two Homo Evolutis, it's really two Homo Evolutis, there're two of them... Hmm? But why am I so excited and happy? And what is a Homo Evolutis... How do I know about them?)

The man was filled with confusion. He must have lost his memory, and he discovered that he couldn't even remember what his name was, nor what his identity was. If not for the fact that he could tell he was a man, he probably wouldn't remember his gender either... This was deep amnesia. Other than language skills and common knowledge, he really couldn't remember anything else. This was sad.

Thinking about this, the man stopped hesitating. He turned towards the two Homo Evolutis to ask, "Who am I? Why am I here? What is happening?"

The two Black Star Troopers glanced at each other before one of them stepped forward to say, "Your name is Wang Shao Yun, can't you remember that anymore?" The voice belonged to a woman.

Shao Yun was shocked because he managed to remember his name instantly. Yes, his name was Wang Shao Yun... but what about the rest? Why couldn't he remember anything else?

The female voice continued, "My name is Ming Ji Jie, do you know who I am?"

Shao Yun was confused. When he heard the name "Ming Ji Jie," an indescribable terror overwhelmed him, and the phrase "the Fallen" cropped up in his mind... but why? What did that mean, and why would he react so negatively to these words? The terror he felt from this name was greater than death, but he couldn't tell why that was. The situation was too confusing.

Ji Jie studied Shao Yun's expression closely and she speculated, "You know me? Or do you remember me from your future?"

Right then, the Black Star Trooper beside her immediately said, "Vice-captain, that is a confidential topic..."

Ji Jie was silent for a moment before she smiled. "Of course, I've misspoken... Wang Shao Yun, I will confirm three things with you now. One, you are indubitably a human being. Be it from the genetics or soul, you are a real human being. This was confirmed by our technology and the Animas. Since you are a human being, you don't need to be guarded around us, because humans will never harm humans, so we will not harm you."

Shao Yun sighed in relief when he heard this, but at the same time, he had a hard time believing the statement. Humans will never harm humans. However, again, he couldn't tell where that feeling came from. Regardless, when the two visibly relaxed, he too put down his guard...

"Two, Wang Shao Yun, we've put your name through all of our databases, but you do not exist in any single of them. You seem to have appeared from thin air. According to all the evidence, you definitely do not belong to this human civilization..."

"Three, the formula that you wrote before you fainted was far more technologically advanced than the metallurgy technology we currently have. It is something we humans cannot research or design at the moment. However, the formula does serve as a great inspiration, and it was thusly that its validity was verified..."

When Ji Jie paused after reading all three points, the Black Star Trooper beside her added, "Therefore, we can confirm two things. One, you're definitely a human being, and two, you're not a human being from this human government. There are too many unknowns surrounding your origin, so now we would like to ask you, is there anything you wish to tell us?"

Shao Yun was silent for a long time before asking, "I have no

comment about everything you've just said, because I don't understand any of them. I can't remember what I've given you, but there is one thing I understand: you're illegally holding me hostage. I demand to know what crime I have committed. If I remember clearly, the Human Creed states that all human beings that haven't been confirmed to be chaos-corrupted have the right for freedom. What you're doing is illegal!"

The two troopers looked at each other. Shao Yun's statement was loaded. The term "Human Creed" was interesting and what was this "chaos-corrupted?" They needed to find out more.

Ji Jie answered, "This is a unique situation that we have to keep you here. However, we do not have any intention to harm you, or else we wouldn't be here. If anything, we're trying to heal you. You have injuries all over your body, and among the human society, only this place has the suitable medical devices to cure your injuries. Don't you feel much better?"

Shao Yun was confused because it seemed like Ji Jie wasn't lying to him, but when he thought about it, he couldn't tell when he got injured, why he got injured, and the extent of his injuries. In fact, he felt that all of this was unbelievable because as the last Black Star Trooper, his training was complete including... including what? By the way, why would he think he was the last Black Star Trooper?

Shao Yun felt increasing despair regarding his own situation, but the long training that had become part of his nature made him calm down. He felt his body and said, "There is nothing wrong with my physical body, but my mental power is still extremely weak. I cannot utilize any of the psychic defensive measures. I need a shot of ZH-317 to recover the mental power and a shot of TTTY-055 to stabilize the soul quotient. Please give me the injection immediately."

The two Black Star Troopers looked at each other again. Honestly, the Wang Shao Yun had given them too many pleasant

surprises, including these two medical shots that they hadn't even heard of before. They could recover the mental power? And what was soul quotient? These were terms they hadn't even heard of before... Wait, there was something called soul? Humanity really had soul?

Ji Jie thought about it and said, "I'm sorry, but I need you to focus. We are currently in Human Calendar year 31. What can you tell me about that?"

Human Calendar year 31, humanity had just escaped the Song of Destruction, obtained the Mo's Ruin, and arrived at this place called the Land of Eternal Shine. A place where humanity called home and a second home planet called Eden. Humanity started building the most glorious mothership in human history called Kun Lun... but Kun Lun will fall due to the Fallen... I can't remember, but there was a silver war in the year 31, and the great leader formed the blazing trail, and that was when humanity first came across... came across what?

Shao Yun felt like his memory had shattered into pieces, but he still managed to latch onto the key points. "Chancellor, yes, I remember, our great leader, our most natural leader, Chancellor Yao Yuan, is still alive! Yes, he should have formed the blazing trail project around this time, and then... I can't remember, but I know that the medicine ZH series and TTTY series haven't been made yet. Yes, I remember that now."

Ji Jie's eyes shimmered with disbelief. She suddenly leaned in to Shao Yun to ask, "I'm curious, what is that psychic power you mentioned earlier? Is it related to the psychokinetic cannon or something else?"

Shao Yun answered unconsciously, "No, psychic power is the Black Star Troopers... sorry, I can't remember."

Ji Jie smiled with satisfaction. "It's okay, we have more than enough. Then, Comrade Wang Shao Yun, please rest well to

recover the damage to your physical and mental health." Then she nodded at the other Black Star Trooper and they prepared to leave.

Shao Yun nodded dumbly, but he suddenly yelled, "Wait, wait a minute, I have something important to see the Chancellor about... even though I can't remember what that was, I have to see him! Now!"

Ji Jie turned to say, "The strangeness of your origin aside, we cannot let you meet the Chancellor because...

"At 10 AM two days ago, the blazing trail unit warped away. You'll have to wait until they return."

Chapter 477: Blazing...Trail!

Time pushed back to two days ago...

Yao Yuan was sitting in the flagship. This was the only flagship created during the three miraculous months after the war, so it naturally became the main flagship for the blazing trail project.

It was worth mentioning that the silver war revealed many of humanity's weaknesses. This was the first time humanity was involved in a large-scale war where the main fighting force was not completely dependent on the Black Star troopers. The final victory, or rather the ability to hold on until the AI robots' retreat, was due mainly to the Defense Unit soldiers who sacrificed themselves.

There were many problems that were revealed in this war, including the formation of the army, the number of soldiers, defense range, and weapons' firepower, as well as problem relating to the spaceships. The first and foremost was the unreliability of the main spaceships the size of the Hope. In comparison, a larger number of smaller cannon spaceships of the same mass could do more damage than a single main spaceship. Therefore, after the silver war, the newly formed Great Academy evaluated this point greatly. After discussion with the government, they came up with three new designs.

Canonship 031 was 20% the size of its predecessor. With the advancement in human technology, especially after gaining the information from the AI fleet, this new canonship had a greater energy storage and movement speed. It had a stronger energy weapon and might become the main fighting force in humanity's fleet in the future.

Destroyer 031 was twice as big as Canonship 031, and its size was between the earlier guardian spaceship and cannon spaceship. It had a mobility that was as good as the Canonship 031, greater

firepower and longevity, and a more powerful energy shield. In the simulated war with the AI fleet, the Destroyer 031 had completely overwritten the need for the old guardian spaceships. In fact, they could rival the enemy main spaceships one on one. This was the perfect spaceship that Bo Li came up with.

Finally, the most important new spaceship. It was personally designed by Bo Li and improved upon by Yue Xuan, the Main Spaceship 031. It had 1.6 times the mass and size of old main spaceships. Furthermore, it didn't retain the old chopstick shape; it had a new bullet shape. It had four times the energy shield of old main spaceship, 7.4 times the energy storage, and a weapon platform that was 17 times more powerful than the old main spaceship!

This was the design of a peak level 3 space civilization, and it was the perfect space battleship!

Of course, to achieve such high level of functionality, it needed more than humanity's current basic technology. To put it simply, the most simple alloy tensile strength was unachievable, much less the metallic components of other key locations. To complete these spaceships, they had to use the alloy created by the alien plant, and a large amount of it!

Therefore, even a few months after the war, humanity had only created one Main Spaceship 031. After a hasty weapons and firepower experiment, it was quickly added to the blazing trail project to act as the project's main flagship. As for the other Main Spaceship 031s... those were merely dreams.

Yao Yuan knew about the difficulty of building these ships. Regarding this spaceship that had the design ideals and power of a peak level 3 space civilization, he personally loved it. However, he also understood that humanity wouldn't be able to create another Main Spaceship 031 for another four to five years. The alien plant's alloy supply had been completely exhausted, and they would have to wait until after the blazing trail project was over before they

could use the alien plant again. Therefore, before that, this Main Spaceship 031 was humanity's strongest battleship.

In reality, Yao Yuan wanted to leave this Main Spaceship 031 back at the City of Light Moon. After he brought most of the senior Black Star troopers away, the City of Light Moon would be in need of military power. This Main Spaceship 031 could replace that loss. However, be it Guang Zhen, Bo Li, or the House of Representatives and the human government, they all adamantly requested for this Main Spaceship 031 to join the blazing trail project. Yao Yuan found himself rejecting the passion of these people. The reasoning was actually really simple: the blazing trail unit had humanity's most powerful soldiers and most advanced technology, it was humanity's best of the best. If the blazing trail project failed... then humanity should just space warp. They had no reason to fight a space civilization of a higher tier.

This was humanity's blazing trail unit, the strongest unit personally led by Yao Yuan. They had to take down the remaining AI fleet in one shot and end the war in the shortest time possible. This was the strongest human fleet... and humanity's last hope.

"The illusory space's data has been connected to the warp engine, but honey, the Mo civilization's illusory space is weaker than I expected. It's only ready after such a long period of calculation."

A voice appeared in Yao Yuan's ear. This was ZERO's voice, it was the voice of a woman, not unlike her voice in the illusory space. At this time, ZERO had moved out of her own illusory space into the Mo civilization's illusory space. In fact, the Mo civilization's illusory space had been attached to the new flagship's engine to act as a navigation system. The illusory space's space warp function could be used to calculate the coordinates.

Yao Yuan replied with a bit of headache, "Can you please find something else to do in your free time other than reading those old Earth's romance webnovels? Those are merely kept as antiquated records, they are completely useless..."

"I beg to differ. The creativity of a lifeform is endless. In fact, the data base of the illusory space I was in had several space civilization designs that were extremely rare and powerful. They were not unlike the cultivation system of these webnovels. By the way, after humanity becomes a level 4 space civilization, you will have to pick a specific development pathway," ZERO said with a laugh.

When a space civilization reached level 4, they would have to evolve into their own unique development pathway. For example, the plant-based space civilization humanity stumbled across before they arrived at this solar system and the gear-based civilization of the Mo race. Of course, humanity could continue on its current path, the most common and what ZERO called the most popular, mechanical civilization. However, the path to break through to a god tier space civilization would be very difficult.

Yao Yuan naturally had his own plans, but now was not the time to discuss that. He shook his head slightly before turning to address Xi Kong beside him. "Xi Kong, how is the communication with Zhang San coming along?"

Xi Kong was also at the captain's room. However, she was wearing a metallic helmet that was connected with multiple electrical lines, and the helmet had swallowed up her small head. When Yao Yuan asked the question, Xi Kong answered shyly, "The connection is not good. I suspect Zhang San might be sick and his physical body is fragile, or perhaps he is starving. In any case, it's not looking good. Regardless, the connection is still there... I've sent the coordinates through the mental power database circuit."

"OK, Nian Nian. I'm calculating already, but this Mo race... sure is something else," ZERO commented.

Yao Yuan became silent after he heard the answer, but his brain was turning. In reality, he was mighty impressed by the main brain power-related creation humanity had received after Yue Xuan joined the Great Academy. A new door by the name of

"psychic power" had been opened with her entry. A great number of designs and products kept on coming. They included more than Yue Xuan's personal designs. There were also contributions from Bo Li and other scientists who came up with new technologies using the new breakthrough in mental power. One example was this mental power database circuit. It was a connection via brain power, and it could enter a human being's thoughts into a computer in database form. The increase in speed by making typing obsolete alone was impressive. It had great potential.

In fact, Yao Yuan's thoughts about humanity's future development were related to this, a mechanical-cum-mental civilization...

Just as Yao Yuan wanted to think deeper, ZERO's voice began again. "OK, the calculation of the coordinates is completed. The triangulation of the data and star chart is complete. We can warp any time now."

Yao Yuan took a deep breath. He opened a voice button next to his seat and said, "This is Yao Yuan. Controllable space warp will occur in half an hour. I repeat, controllable space warp will occur in half an hour. Entering first level of war preparations. All Black Star troopers are required to enter their own fighting units. Every spaceship is to operate their energy shield and prepare their weapons. Checking energy levels one last time. I repeat, this is not a drill. The blazing trail project is initiating soon. All units have to enter final preparation..."

After Yao Yuan said that, he stood up to leave the captain's room. As he walked, he said, "ZERO, I leave the space warp to you. Xi Kong, you stay here. If there's anything serious, contact me via the soul web..." He left the captain's room to head towards the flagship's bridge.

Half an hour later, Yao Yuan in his red Space Armor entered his Real Red Lightning Steel Ball. Around him, several dozen Steel Balls were in ready mode. They could enter battle at any moment.

Inside the Steel Ball, Yao Yuan announced after taking a deep breath, "I order: space warp, initiating now! Blazing trail project... starts now!"

"Captain's order! Space warping now!"

"Count down, 10, 9, 8..."

"...2, 1!"

In that instant, the blazing trail unit, which was at the City of Light Moon, disappeared to the other end of the universe. Back on the City of Light Moon, all the citizens prayed silently, and many of their eyes were wet with tears...

Chapter 478: Last Chapter

"...This here is humanity's earlier history. After we were chased away from our original home planet, we were forced to find our way in the vast space. The cosmos was not the heaven we imagined, but a real hell. Every step, every improvement, was built upon blood and sacrifice. This was humanity's... age of cosmic exploration."

A teen said with a smile. Gathered before him were several children with their eyes opened wide. The teen suddenly stopped like he was reminiscing about the past or thinking about something.

"Grandpa... Grandpa!"

One of the girls got impatient and shook the teen's leg. As she did so, she said, "Grandpa, you have to continue the story. Your stories are very nice, more interesting than the stuff we learn in class."

The teen shook his head and said, "These are not stories.... Fine, maybe they rare stories that I've made up, so don't go around repeating them, or I might be branded a traitor by slandering the King's name..." The teen petered off to a series of boisterous laughs.

One of the boys suddenly said, "Grandpa, then you have to continue the story. What happened after the King led the blazing trail away? Now that humanity had the City of Light Moon, what happened next? Did the AI fleet get wiped out by the King?"

The teen shook his head again. He walked to the window, and from his vantage point, he could see the large building standing far away in the distance... The altar, or the thing that sealed the King, Yao Yuan, the reason why he was there...

"After the blazing trail? Well, that's a story..."

"After the age of cosmic exploration."

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